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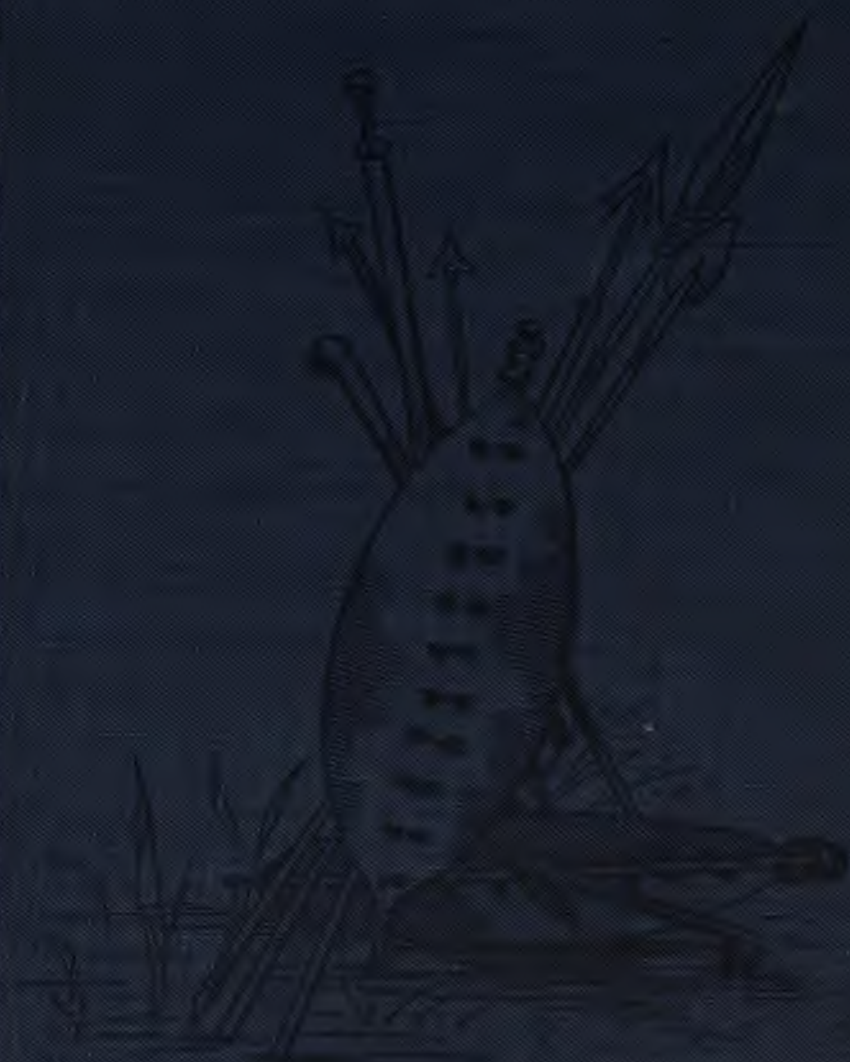
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THE SHERVINTONS

SOLDIERS OF FORTUNE



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THE SHERVINTONS

SOLDIERS OF FORTUNE

SHERVINTON OF MADAGASCAR
SHERVINTON OF SALVADOR
AND TOM SHERVINTON, N.N.C.

BY
KATHLEEN SHERVINTON

LONDON: T. FISHER UNWIN
PATERNOSTER SQUARE. 1899

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[Daly, David, 1850-1900]

DAVID DALY, 1850-1900.

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Shervinton of Madagascar



I

EARLY LIFE

CHARLES ROBERT ST. LEGER SHERVINTON was born June 4, 1852. He came of a family originally Saxon, but who have been settled in Ireland for two hundred years, and whose members have been soldiers for generations.

His father, Colonel Shervinton, was in the 46th Regiment, and served all through the Crimean War, was mentioned in despatches, received the four clasps and was promoted Major for service in the field. He was the senior effective officer serving with the detachment of the 46th Regiment, at the close of the battle of Inkerman.

His grandfather served throughout the Peninsular War in the 11th Regiment and 6th Caçadores, was mentioned in despatches, and promoted Captain at the age of nineteen. He was present at the battles of Busaco, Badajos (two), Fuentes d'Onor, Sala-

manca, Ciudad Rodrigo, Pamplona, Vittoria, Nivelles, Orthez, and received the Portuguese Gold Cross. In 1826 he embarked in the *Southworth* transport in command of a wing of the 99th Regiment for Mauritius. Much sickness prevailed in the crowded transport during the voyage, and he died of cholera at the early age of thirty-three, all the medicine on board having been expended. The regiment erected a monument to his memory at Port Louis where he was buried. He left a son two years old, and another was born after his death. Fifty years later the eldest of these sons (father of St. Leger Shervinton) was the guest of the Admiral of the Fleet, Sir Edmund Commerel, V.C., G.C.B., at a naval club dinner. Near him sat a very old man, Admiral Saunders, who, on hearing his name, turned towards him and said, "I have followed your career with the greatest interest although we have never met; but half a century ago your father died on board my ship off Mauritius, and I have never forgotten the name. It is strange that after so many years we should now meet for the first time."

His great-grandfather of the 41st Regiment raised and equipped a troop on his own estate during the Irish Rebellion of 1798, and was given the title of the "Honourable Captain Shervinton" by the King, George III.

In early life Colonel St. Leger Shervinton was remarkable for his great personal strength, was a good all-round man at athletics, a formidable left-hand bowler at cricket, a fine rider, and a powerful swimmer. As a boy he never objected to well-

deserved punishment ; if he had his fun he willingly accepted the penalty. Never was he known to give away a colleague, and frequently suffered in silence for faults he had never committed. He was a loyal friend, a generous enemy, warm-hearted and open-handed—never speaking an unkind word and almost too ready to believe the best of everybody.

As a boy nothing was too daring for him to attempt, and his immense strength and utter absence of fear seemed to carry him through anything. More than one life he saved on the Repository pond at Woolwich, where he skated from dawn to dusk as long as the ice would bear, and cured his coughs and colds (he said) by falling through where the ice was thin. At New Cross Station one day he jumped across the rails in front of an in-coming train—it was the one he wanted to catch, and at the last moment he saw that he was on the wrong platform. Another time he swam home across the Thames at Woolwich by night.

He was quite young when he administered a severe thrashing to a well-known light-weight prize-fighter, who challenged him for having accidentally trodden on his foot, for which Shervinton apologised at the time, but the man made some remarks which ended in a fight, and the prize-fighter was carried away much damaged.

A good many years later Colonel Shervinton and his second son Will were awaiting their train at a country station and entered into conversation with the station-master McDougall, who showed with

pride a watch presented to him by his old regiment, the 71st, in recognition of his services with them and in the police force at Balaclava. On being asked under whom he had served at Balaclava, he promptly replied, "Captain Shervinton." "Was he anything like me?" McDougall looked earnestly at the colonel and exclaimed, "Why, I do believe it was yourself!" and great was his joy at meeting his old captain after nearly thirty years. Will Shervinton invited him to have a drink, and they went into a neighbouring public-house, McDougall remarking to the proprietor, "This is Mr. Shervinton." The proprietor, a big burly man, turned round and looked him up and down with a discontented expression. "Well," he grumbled at last, "you are not the Mr. Shervinton I knew, or you have grown considerably since then. Why, you must be six foot three, and he was more like five foot ten. I ought to know, because he was the lad that thrashed the light-weight, who was carried into my house for repairs after the fight. I was the heavy-weight myself, I was." Young Shervinton laughed and replied that he was his brother, and the old prize-fighter thawed at once.

Speaking of this incident recalls another. When Shervinton was scarcely fifteen he had a fight with a hulking gipsy, who persisted in throwing stones at his dog. The gipsy was evidently deficient in the science of the sport, for he was knocked down every time. After each round he was asked if he had had enough, and at last was obliged to confess that he had. His antagonist then presented him with half

a crown; and, the fun being over, the guardians of the peace stepped in, and they were taken before the magistrate. Shervinton gave a graphic description of the encounter, and then, staring round the court with a face of the utmost surprise, exclaimed in a deeply injured voice, "And then the bobbies came and took us all up."

The court was convulsed with laughter, and as soon as the magistrate could command his voice, he fined him ten-and-sixpence. The lad's finances did not run to that sum, and an old pensioner stood up and paid it, saying that he could not see the Major's son go to prison for the sake of half a quid.

Strangely enough his early predilections were all for the sea, and his fifteenth year was passed on board H.M.S. *Britannia*, naval training ship, as cadet for the Royal Navy. He passed in sixth, out of one hundred and four. After this he was sent to an army crammer, but in 1870 took up electric telegraphy for a time, and went out to the West Indies, laying lines through the drowned forests of the Essequibo, standing on a plank, with the caymen rushing in and out through the water-weed.

On his return he failed to pass his examination for the army; it was a bitter disappointment, but he said to his father, "It was my own fault, and I will never cost you another shilling."

He went straight to Canterbury, where he enlisted in the 11th Hussars, and was made a lance-sergeant within six months. No doubt this training stood him in good stead in the future; but at the

end of a twelvemonth his father purchased his discharge, wishing to place him in a better position.

Colonel Gordon, of Chinese fame, had just then been appointed by Ismail Pasha to succeed Sir Samuel Baker Pasha as his representative at Khartoum in 1874, and young Shervinton called on him, hoping to induce Gordon to take him to Equatorial Africa. However, Gordon told him that nothing would induce him to take an Englishman; had he been disposed to do so, the son of his old friend Shervinton was the man of all others he would have chosen. (Subsequently the Khedive insisted on his taking a nominee of his own.)

But Shervinton was never long idle—he now went through a course of land surveying, which he afterwards found of great use; and at the end of this course he went out to Travancore to try coffee-planting. This by itself would scarcely have suited him, but there was a good deal of sport to be had at the same time. Soon after he arrived he had the good fortune to shoot an elephant. When he came in and told his companions, they at first expressed incredulity—nevertheless they sent out to see, and the elephant was found.

His friends sometimes endeavoured to discover if there was anything he would *not* attempt. They made him a bet one night after dinner that he would not walk to Travancore before a certain hour in the morning. Of course Shervinton was instantly ready to go, and started with a single guide. But this man soon deserted him on the wild jungle path, terrified at the sounds of animals roaming in

the darkness. Shervinton reached Travancore in safety with three quarters of an hour to spare, but with the soles of his shoes worn through and his feet in a pitiable condition. The hospitable Rajah of Travancore insisted upon keeping him as his guest until again able to walk.

The natives were full of alarm at the report of a tiger prowling in the neighbourhood and committing depredations. One night it killed a cow, but was startled away from its meal. All the next night Shervinton sat up in a tree close by waiting for the tiger to return. At last it came, but it was too dark to see; he fired at random, and missed the brute. However, the bullet must have gone pretty close, as next morning he found the bullet-hole in the cow, exactly where the tiger had been eating.

But long hours at work under the fierce sun, nights spent in the bush, or in a tree waiting for a chance shot, began to tell on his magnificent constitution. However, an accident was the final cause of his leaving Travancore. The coolie quarters took fire one night, and while standing on a wall assisting and directing, it fell with him, severely injuring his knee. There seemed no chance of his getting well out there, so after a time he was invalided home with a stiff knee. The doctors treated him in vain, and at last he insisted upon going to Hutton the bone-setter. Three times with all his strength he wrenched the injured limb—the third time Shervinton fainted—Hutton said he had never seen a man bear so much pain without flinching. This

rough-and-ready treatment was successful and the knee entirely recovered, but it was long before he regained his health. At this time the doctors gave him only two years to live—with great care. Shervinton came to the conclusion that the game was not worth the candle, and that if he had only two years to live, he had better make the most of them and enjoy himself. His father being suddenly ordered to China, the best of friends took him with them to Jersey, and under their care he was as strong as ever before the end of a year, and longing for some outlet for his energies. But in coffee-planting, or land surveying, or telegraph laying he could not find a career ; his heart was not in them, for he was a soldier born and bred by race and by tradition, and the excitement of danger was his natural element—like all of his name. In the next generation a small, six-year-old Shervinton (his son) came in from the stables after a prolonged absence, saying, "It isn't true that the new horse is a kicker. I've been lying underneath him all this time, and he never kicked me once." He liked the excitement of danger too. "*Bon chien chasse de race.*"

The South African troubles were now arousing some attention at home. As far back as 1876 attacks had been made on the mountain fortress of Sekukuni, the ally of Cetewayo, and in February, 1877, he sued for peace, although his stronghold had not been taken. When the Transvaal was annexed in 1877, Sekukuni's country was included in the new British territories.

But the troubles continued, and men from

England were urgently needed to help to put down rebellion and to assist in the defence of our colonial possessions. Great inducements were held out, and liberal promises made to volunteers.

The Shervintons, of course, were eager to go ; it was a chance of active service which might not easily occur again. Their father, Colonel Shervinton, was in Hong Kong. It would take three months to write and get an answer, and time was precious if they wished to be first in the field.

So Shervinton, then in his 25th year, and his youngest brother, Tom, went out to South Africa as volunteers.

Tom, who was the third and youngest son of Colonel Shervinton, had just completed his 19th year. From childhood he had been devoted to a soldier's life, and familiar with all its details. He had been educated at Dover College, and was just going up for his army examination, when the South African fever laid hold of him, and he went out there instead. At this time he was the merest boy, very young for his years, quick-tempered, but bright and cheery, and of the most unselfish and lovable disposition. From the quiet of Dover College he was at once plunged into the life of men and the horrors of war, and acquitted himself with the pluck and spirit which was his natural inheritance.

II

IN SOUTH AFRICA—GAIKA AND GAELIKA WARS

THE two Shervintons arrived at King William's Town in August, 1877, and joined the Colonial Forces, who were now waging war against the Gaelikas, under their chief Kreli, and the Gaikas under Sandilli. These chiefs had been the aggressors, as they had attacked our allies, the Fingoes.

Tom joined, as a trooper, the "Frontier Armed Mounted Police Force," which was afterwards reconstituted as the "Cape Mounted Rifles," in 1879, and made a cavalry regiment, to the displeasure of the men, who had joined as police, and whose wishes in the matter had not been consulted.

Shervinton obtained a commission as lieutenant in "Pulleine's Rangers," a corps of infantry raised by Major Pulleine, of the 24th Regiment, and both brothers were at once sent up to the front.

Within three weeks Shervinton was made drill instructor. He soon became known as a daring rider, ever ready to volunteer for the post of danger, carrying despatches alone through dangerous parts,



C. R. ST. LEGER SHERVINTON.
1877.

&c., and although considered rather too reckless, he seemed to come through unscathed where others lost their lives.

The Gaelika Campaign was not exactly a picnic, and food was often very short, as will be seen from quotations from a letter which appeared in a Cape paper:—

“During three days of incessant rain, we were almost wholly without provisions, our sole food consisting of meat without even a pinch of salt, and a few mealies given us by the Fingoes. We were then ordered to start when the rations were two days overdue, and on our refusal were told that it amounted to mutiny. Eventually some broken mouldy biscuits were served out, some men being fortunate enough to get a very small quantity of bad meat. When there was meal, it was often mixed on an old mackintosh, for want of proper utensils.”

One of the first battles was fought at Ibeka on September 28th, and Tom was present with the Frontier Armed Mounted Police. Immediately in front of the little fort at Ibeka was the boundary between the countries of the Gaelikas and the Fingoes. (The war had been begun by the Gaelikas attacking our allies the Fingoes on the Government Reserves.) On the day of the battle there were only 120 Frontier Armed Mounted Police at Ibeka, and about 2,000 Fingoes (our allies to run away, Tom called them). Kreli, who was the most powerful chief in Kaffraria, attacked with 8,000 men, being afterwards reinforced with 2,000 horsemen. They advanced to within a short distance of the

camp firing, but were driven back by the guns again and again. The Fingoes were desired to charge a bank where some Kaffirs were massed. They hesitated, but Allan Maclean jumped into the ditch, riding-whip in hand, and drove them on towards the Kaffirs. Fifty of the Frontier Armed Mounted Police then charged with fixed bayonets, and the Gaelikas wheeled about and fled.

The Gaelikas lost over a thousand men. Our loss was forty Fingoes killed and eleven wounded. Not one of the Frontier Armed Mounted Police was killed.

The night which followed was bitterly cold, with heavy rain, no fires, and no food, and all night the little garrison remained under arms, expecting to be attacked. At daybreak the Gaelikas returned, but were driven back by Maclean and his Fingoes, the 7-pounders completing the rout. This was the last attack on Ibeka. Under cover of a dense curtain of fog the Gaelikas withdrew ten miles from the fort.

Commandant Griffiths was now sent into Gaelikaland with all the troops that could be mustered to destroy Kreli. An attack was made on Kreli's Kraal, in which Shervinton commanded the advanced guard.

The Gaelikas, taken by surprise, fled, hotly pursued by our troops. Kreli lost over 1,500 men, and would now willingly have made peace, which was not granted. Want of ammunition and supplies kept the forces inactive at Ibeka, but after waiting twelve days Griffiths advanced without them and drove the enemy from Lusisi, thirty-five miles beyond Ibeka.

Here they remained some time, almost washed away by the rain, and more than half starved. Many

a man who escaped the bullets of the enemy afterwards died like Tom Shervinton from ill-health caused by the exposure and hardships they endured. One man wrote : " We are all dreadfully hungry here, and for six days no one has had his spurs off."

The Burgher force of 1,000 men now demanded their discharge, and they could not be detained against their wishes. When they left, they took with them all the cattle they could lay hands on. They considered that they had been badly treated, and refused to serve when a little later the Cape Government tried to induce them to return.

Early in December some of the regular troops, with a Naval Brigade, crossed the Kei river on the way to Ibeka, to make a third attempt to clear Gaelikaland, Colonel Glyn of the 24th having entire command.

A thousand pounds was offered for the capture of Kreli, but this wily chief was never caught, and by this time the Gaikas had joined the Gaelikas.

There were constant skirmishes, and a great deal of desultory fighting. Both the Shervintons were in the thick of it. Charlie was anxious to get Tom into his own regiment, and got the promise of a lieutenancy for him, which Tom declined, as he preferred to be in a mounted regiment. However, he soon regretted his refusal, as he was sent on every foot patrol going, and thought he might just as well be an officer. Unfortunately it was too late, as the commission had been given to another.

Shervinton was promoted Captain in January, 1878, and Tom, full of pride in his elder brother, wrote

home: "Charlie is getting on splendidly. He is Captain in Pulleine's Rangers, and gets 21s. a day. He is very popular with his men, who say they will follow him wherever he chooses to lead them. When he left King William's Town they all wanted to get into his company, and actually smuggled themselves into the train, but were found out at Kei Road and were sent back to King. He is very good to me, and helps me in every way he can."

Servinton was already pretty well known, and constantly mentioned in despatches by General Sir A. Cunynghame, Colonel Glyn, and others. He was present at most of the engagements, and his hardy physique enabled him to resist the effects of insufficient food and constant exposure, which told so heavily upon poor Tom, who was still a growing lad.

In March, 1878, the Imperial troops were raised from 2,500 to nearly 5,000, and consisted of two Batteries Royal Artillery, one Company Royal Engineers, the 24th, 88th, and 90th Regiments in Cape Colony, the 3rd Buffs and 80th in Natal, and the 30th Light Infantry in the Transvaal. Also a small Naval Brigade under Captain Campbell, R.N., and a contingent of 400 Boers under Piet Uys, who, with his son, a boy of twelve, perished at Unkunkinglove.

Servinton commanded Pulleine's Rangers with Colonel Hopton's column on the Dalcousie, and crossed the Kei river to relieve the troops stationed at the "Springs."

He had some narrow escapes. Riding alone into Dimba's Kraal one pitch-dark night, he only got away thanks to his good horse. Another time he

volunteered to carry an express for assistance, was attacked on the way, and got through with some difficulty.

At the "Springs" he had to build a fort, which was called "Fort Pulleine." The General wrote across his plan, "Very good indeed," and it was said to be one of the best forts planned out there. Then as there was a temporary lull, he employed his men in making bricks to build their huts, as he found that they grew discontented unless there was something to occupy them, and he tried to amuse them as well, joining heartily in their games of football and cricket.

Sometimes they would have to turn out about 1 a.m. in pursuit of Kaffirs, and after marching from ten to fifteen miles up and down hill, would arrive at their destination only to find that the enemy had bolted. This they considered the hardest work of all, on account of the frequent disappointment. But they cheered up when these night patrols ended in a brush.

Being in command of the station at the "Springs," the Government supplied him with a horse and forage. He was now under the Imperial Government, and received 15s. a day—he would have had 25s. a day from the Colonial Government, but he preferred to be as he was, as he hoped to be eventually transferred permanently to the Imperial service. This was one of the ambitions of his youth. The other was to obtain the V.C. Neither was to be fulfilled, although it was said that if he had a hundred opportunities of winning the V.C. he would win it every time.

He had 100 men of his own regiment and 900 Fingoes at Fort Pulleine. He received an ugly stab from an assegai during one of their constant patrols. An officer stationed at the "Springs" thus describes the incident: "While Shervinton was visiting a block-house a couple of miles from the 'Springs,' as evening was drawing in, it was observed from the camp through a field-glass that some two dozen natives were closing on his track. It was evident that he saw them too, for suddenly he shortened his reins and set his horse going his best. Emptying his revolver right and left as he dashed through them he left five men on the ground behind him, escaping with an assegai wound in the leg, which prevented him walking for six weeks, though able to perform his duties on horseback."

On another occasion he was seen to have a narrow escape as a huge Zulu hurled an assegai at him, but turning quick as lightning in the saddle, Shervinton caught the assegai in one hand and shot the man dead with the revolver which he carried in the other. He had the advantage of being able to use his left hand as easily as his right.

Three times he co-operated in a combined movement to attack the Tala and Inyezane, but when there was no fighting he found things very dull. Such a thing as an English newspaper was not to be had. But the war was now at an end.

Sandilli, the Gaika chief, was killed early in June, and an amnesty was proclaimed on June 28th. Kreli, the Gaelika chief, after wandering about for a long time, finally gave himself up to the authorities, and was allowed to settle near his old kraal.

Shervinton hoped to be sent home to go through the School of Musketry at Hythe, and also a School of Instruction. Little did he think that it would be seventeen long years before he saw home again.

In June he quitted the "Springs," having been sent 80 miles further up-country into Bechuanaland, where he commanded the last and farthest outpost in the Transkei, with a strong detachment consisting of 180 Pulleine's Rangers, 100 Police, 1 Gun, and 200 Fingoes.

In October he was appointed one of the members of the Gaelikaland Commission engaged in dividing the country lately occupied by the Gaelikas into farms for the Europeans, and locations for the Gaikas, who had been removed from the Colony. It was expected that this would occupy the Commission till April or May. Here he found his knowledge of surveying most useful. The other members were Captain Hughes and Captain Sansom, and Colonel Eustace, president.

Shervinton describes a dinner party which he gave here. The menu was original. Porridge and fresh milk, curried salmon and rice, bread, butter and jam, bottled beer. This fare was highly appreciated, for as a rule they lived on very tough beef, and bread that was described as being as hard as a cannon-ball.

Before entering upon the Zulu War of 1879, I will devote a chapter to the fortunes of the young brother, Tom, as it shows something of the hardships of a soldier's life in those rough times.

III

TOM SHERVINTON A TROOPER IN SOUTH AFRICA

ON the arrival of Tom Shervinton at King William's Town, he at once joined the Frontier Armed Police Force as a trooper. A capital rider and devoted to horses, he preferred to be in a mounted regiment. But he was far too young for such a life and such a climate, and though he loved it at first, he soon found that it was by no means as rosy as it had been represented. Always tall and slight, he soon grew to over six feet. The hardships and constant exposures of the first few months told heavily upon him, and his health soon became a source of constant anxiety to his brother.

Shervinton, older, hardier, and obtaining a commission at once, found little to complain of, his iron constitution scarcely suffered from privation and discomfort, but Tom remained a trooper for some months, and, like his fellow-privates, had much to endure.

Anxious to see service as soon as possible, he at once volunteered for the front, ordered his uniform, and bought his horse and accoutrements. A trooper's initial expenses were pretty heavy; a horse cost

about £28; accoutrements, blankets, &c., £15; and uniform about £8. However, the uniform was not ready in time, and he was not only obliged to remain behind, but had to hand over his horse, &c., to another man—his first horse which he had taken such pride in buying, and which he said was the best in the camp. His next horse he nearly lost too. He was sent as orderly to Fort Murray, nine miles off, and when he came out of the office where they kept him for three hours, his horse was gone. Luckily he had his revolver with him for the long lonely walk back, for the lurking Kaffirs would soon have disposed of an unarmed man. On his return to camp he found that a trooper had borrowed the horse, finding his own over-tired.

Among his comrades in the ranks there were plenty of gentlemen—men who had been in the Guards, Hussars, and Lancers.

The Colonial troops could be moved with great rapidity—half an hour was considered sufficient for all preparations. On horseback they carried a valise, two saddle-bags, nose-bag, gun and revolver, two blankets, a few underclothes, and a week's rations. Within thirty minutes of receiving an order, they saddled up and were off. Of course they had to suffer hardships to which the regulars were not exposed.

Sometimes Tom and his fellow-troopers were actually without food for days, and had to steal the mealies or Indian corn from their horses to keep themselves alive. With neither tents nor trees for shelter, they lay for weeks on the bare desert plains,

with the rain pouring down day and night, and only their soaking blankets to cover them. Tom's health began to give way, and the doctors said his lungs were going, but he stuck gallantly to his work. There was great discontent in the Frontier Armed Mounted Police. The regulars said they were treated like dogs, and worse than niggers. Danger they did not mind, nor discomfort if necessary, but it was hard to return, after a long day spent in fighting, and find nothing to eat. On more than one occasion one of the regiments shared its dinner with them. When there was neither meat nor biscuit left, they were offered coarse meal, which they refused ; they had no means of grinding or cooking it, and no utensils for mixing bread. And after lying down hungry to snatch a few hours' sleep on the veldt, it was a common thing to be wakened up in the middle of the night and sent—still stupid with sleep—to ride express for perhaps eighty or ninety miles through some of the most dangerous parts of the country.

Tom came in for his share of fighting, and was present at several engagements.

On December 30, 1877, the Kaffirs sacked and burnt a farmhouse a few miles from Draat-bosch. Major Moore, 38th Regiment, with thirty of the Frontier Armed Mounted Police, went to take the offenders, and came upon between 200 and 300 of them concealed behind stones and rocks sloping down a kloof. A bullet was their only answer when summoned to surrender and give up their arms. The police dismounting, advanced in skirmishing

order, each man holding his own horse, and with a few volleys drove out the Kaffirs, who retreated over the hill, carrying their wounded in blankets. The police mounted, galloped to another kloof about a mile away, and drove them off again. This they did four times, till they were about ten miles deep in hills. About 500 Kaffirs were now seen advancing up a hill covered with rocks. The police galloped to the top to get shelter behind the stones, and were in the act of dismounting, when Kaffirs started up from behind the stones and fired at them. A panic seized the police; about twenty of them set spurs to their horses and bolted, leaving only ten with Major Moore, Tom Shervinton among them. The Kaffirs ran in among them throwing assegais, and one man Giesse, who had not been able to remount, was stabbed between the shoulders and killed. Major Moore walked his horse up to the Kaffir, drew his revolver and shot him. He was then himself wounded in the arm by an assegai, but shot his assailant, and then gave the order to retire. As Tom turned his horse, he saw a Kaffir just at his horse's tail levelling his assegai; luckily his carbine was loaded, and he shot him through the body, and shot another in the hip at fifteen paces. Then he galloped after Major Moore (who afterwards received the V.C.). Tom and nine others were then told off to push the post into Gray's Farm, but it was far too small a party for the work; they were almost surrounded and had to gallop for their lives.

Next day—Sunday—40 soldiers and 20 police

were sent out to do it. They saw about 3,000 Kaffirs two and a half miles off, and awaited their attack. They came up with the foot in skirmishing order, and a body of horse on each side. The soldiers opened fire at 300 yards, and the Kaffir horse wheeled round so as to outflank them.

The firing was heard in camp, and ten volunteers were asked for to go to their assistance. Tom, being nearest, was the first to volunteer. They saddled up and were off, the soldiers following on foot. They met eight men of the police (Afrikanders and Danes) who had run away, and told them that the troops were beaten, and all the police force killed. The runaways were told to fall in, and the small party galloped on to cover the retreat of the soldiers. But the deserters had lied, and the Kaffirs soon retreated. Only eight of the Frontier Armed Mounted Police had held their ground, and these were all English recruits—the oldest had only six months' service, and the youngest barely one.

Next day the telegraph wire was cut, and ten of the Frontier Armed Mounted Police were sent to mend it. Tom and another man were told off as scouts. The pole had been cut down, the wire and bell smashed. They mended it and returned. It was considered a dangerous affair. The General and the Manager-General of the Telegraph Department sent letters of congratulation on their success. The General asked for the names of the party, and said they were to be thanked on parade.

All these little excitements kept things lively, but there were many causes of dissatisfaction, and one

was the number of horses that were lost from being turned out on the veldt to graze. No doubt there was reason in this, as forage was so dear. A small bundle cost 1s. 2d., and a horse required five or six of these in a day, so that the troopers had to spend more than all their pay on their horses, and had nothing left to live upon themselves.

Tom had paid £28 for his horse; it was turned out on the veldt and was lost. He reported it to the corporal in charge, and four men were ordered to saddle up and look for it. It was found fifteen miles away, dead lame. Next day when the troops went out, the corporal said the horse was too lame to stray, and must go with the others. However, the men in charge of the horses allowed it to stray, and it was heard of no more. The horse guards were fined £2, but Tom lost his horse and got nothing for it, though he applied to the remount fund for half its value. He was offered several other horses at £25 each, but refused them all, as he said they were not worth £10.

Besides losing horses, their other property was frequently stolen, as many bad characters joined these regiments. Tom found it hard lines to have all his sugar and coffee stolen when their luxuries were so scanty, and when he went up to the front all his things, as well as his brother's, were left at Fort Murray. Everything was stolen, and Tom was left with nothing but his uniform.

However, he said he seldom wore his clothes in the rainy season, they all put on mackintoshes only, as the best way to avoid rheumatic fever. For

three months Tom was on duty every day, with very little sleep, and not half enough to eat, and continual rain over the Bashee where they were encamped. The river overflowed, carrying away saddles, &c., and leaving them up to their knees in water, with nothing to turn to at night except their dripping blankets. The heavy duty by day and the comfortless nights affected all seriously; numbers of men went daily to hospital, Tom among others, and was kept there for over three months.

His health was now very bad, and his brother Charlie managed to get him his discharge from the police, for which he considered him totally unfitted. He was anxious to send him home to be carefully looked after, and said that Tom was so simple that he could never rough it properly with a lot of men.

However, Tom thought differently, and as soon as he got his discharge from the Frontier Armed Mounted Police, instead of returning to England, he got a commission in the Colonial Commissariat with 7s. 6d. a day pay. He found the work pretty hard, as he was at it from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. He had daily to ration 250 men, besides various outposts and stations, and then make out the ration returns at night, which sometimes took him till 11.30 p.m.

He was now at Malan's Mission in the Transkei, a desolate country, hilly, windy, and destitute of bush. He lived in a mud-hut thatched with straw: three poles in the form of a triangle supported the roof; a bed was made out of six pieces of wood stuck in the ground with some sacks across, some

empty soap and candle boxes for seats, and a bayonet for a candlestick.

Tom had thatched the hut himself; there was no one on the station who understood thatching, so he undertook to do it for all. It was probably not entirely successful, as far as his own hut was concerned, for he often complained that it leaked like a sieve. He used to spread his waterproof cloak over him, head and all, at night, and sometimes found three or four quarts of water in it in the morning. Sometimes the horses stampeded, and there was trouble to get them back. One night the whole of them—ninety in all—disappeared, but were brought back safely the following afternoon.

Tom did not much like commissariat work; he described the department as fearful for "grouching." The senior officer could not account for 98 lbs. of tea, and declared that he had sent it to Tom Shervinton, who must be held responsible. However, Tom was not so simple as they thought; it was not in the waybill, he had given no receipt for it, and declined to pay. Seeing that he was determined to fight the matter out, the senior commissariat officer gave way, and eventually found that the tea had been sent to another station.

Towards the end of 1878 his corps was disbanded, and Tom was anxious to obtain a lieutenancy in a corps that was being raised for the Transvaal to hem in Cetewayo. The doctors told him that he had better go home if he wanted to see any of his own people again, and Charlie was always urging him to go, or if he would not do that, wished to

send him to Bloemfontein to see what the climate there would do for him.

However, Tom was anxious to be independent, and to earn his own living, so he went to King William's Town, and got a lieutenancy in the 22nd Regiment, Natal Native Contingent, No. 1 Column, in which corps Charlie now had a captaincy. Their uniform was tan-coloured cord, and a smasher hat with blue silk handkerchief round it.

Tom was now sent with his regiment to Fort Pearson on the Lower Tugela, and for a short time the brothers were together.

IV

THE ZULU WAR

SHERVINTON was now transferred to the 5th Battalion Natal Native Contingent, with which he served throughout the Zulu War. Tom was also in the Natal Native Contingent as lieutenant, and the brothers belonged to the same column.

During the Zulu War 36 different volunteer corps were raised—a force of 9,000 men, horse and foot. At the beginning of the war some of these Colonial regiments were described as being no better than a mounted rabble, undisciplined, untrained, and only half-armed, for at first only 10 per cent. of the rank and file were provided with firearms. In spite of these drawbacks, they soon proved themselves to be composed of splendid fighting material, and when well-officered were second to none. The native levies numbered 7,400, of these 5,000 were Swazies, the hereditary enemies of the Zulus. The whole of the troops, Imperial and Colonial, were formed into three columns under Lord Chelmsford :—

1st Column, commanded by Colonel Pearson,
3rd Buffs.

2nd Column, by Colonel Glyn, 24th Regiment.

3rd Column, by Colonel Evelyn Wood, V.C., C.B., 90th Regiment.

The Zulu army consisted of 33 regiments, 25 of which (numbering 40,000) were composed of seasoned men in the prime of life ; the remaining 8 regiments comprised men who were either too old or too young for active service except in case of emergency. Besides the assegais and knobkerries with which the Zulus were armed, many of them were provided with firearms. At least 400,000 rifles had been smuggled into South Africa in defiance of the law, and become the property of the natives. Consequently the Colonial forces were frequently at a great disadvantage, as so few of them were at first provided with firearms.

Cetewayo, the Zulu chief, had long defied the British. He had backed up Sekukuni in his rebellion, and later the sons of one of his chiefs had seized two native women on British territory—their father's wives who had taken refuge there. Also another party of Zulus had caught and maltreated an English officer.

The authorities, tired of these lawless ways, demanded the surrender of the two sons of Sirayo, a fine of 500 cattle, and the entire dispersion of the Zulu army, with the threat of war if these conditions were not complied with by December 31st.

Cetewayo, who boasted that he would drive all the white men into the sea, made no reply, and war commenced on January 12th, when the Tugela river was successfully crossed, both Shervintons being present.

The infantry were hauled across in a flat-bottomed boat by oxen, immense numbers of which were employed in drawing the heavy wagons, some of which carried 8,000 lbs. weight, and required a team of 18 oxen. Altogether over 28,000 horses and transport animals were employed in the course of this war.

Colonel Pearson with the right column reached the Inyezane on January 22nd, and here a battle was fought which lasted for over two hours. The enemy left 300 dead on the field, their wounded they carried away. Our loss was 10 killed and 16 wounded. Of the 3 officers and 6 non-commissioned officers killed and wounded, all except one officer belonged to the same company. The natives deserted them and the Zulus ran in and assegaied them. Colonel Pearson and Colonel Parnell had their horses shot under them. The enemy were 5,000 strong.

Captain Barber, who was present, related the following incident :—

“We were ordered to disperse some natives, and had got about three-fourths of the way when some 2,000 Zulus appeared to spring out of the ground and opened fire on us. We managed to get cover for a time, but our only chance was to get down the hill as fast as we could. Fortunately we had a good start, and as soon as the Zulus appeared over the crest of the hill we poured a volley into them, but their numbers were so great we expected to be completely wiped out. Suddenly one of my men called my attention to a body of black cavalry led by an officer who looked to our eyes as black as the rest. They were coming at tearing speed down the

other valley, and we took them at first for another body of the enemy, the whole front of the hill being now covered with Zulus. To our surprise the officer leading the cavalry never stopped, but turned up some little distance at the foot of the hill, when he and his company (about 60 or more) dismounted, threw themselves on the ground, and looping the reins round one foot, opened fire from their rifles. It was the work of a moment, but the effect was electric, and the Zulus swept off to the right. The officer and his men remounted, galloped across the foot of the mountain, again threw themselves from their horses and used their rifles with deadly effect. Meanwhile we also were doing our best, and when presently we met in the valley we recognised Captain Shervinton and his mounted infantry and gave them a cheer."

The Zulus called Shervinton "White Moustache," probably because his fair moustache was conspicuous with his burnt skin and black hair, though the latter was scarcely noticeable, as he was accustomed to shave his head on a campaign.

It was thought likely that the right column would encounter the whole Zulu army on the way to Ekowe, but fortunately this did not happen, and the old Norwegian mission station was reached on January 23rd. It is situated high up on the Iloye, more than 2,000 feet above the level of the sea. The old missionary houses were utilised as military store-rooms, and the church as a hospital, while the tower made a capital signalling station, and the troops were set to work to fortify the whole as strongly as possible.

On the 28th Colonel Pearson received the news of the disaster of Isandhlwana, with permission from Lord Chelmsford to withdraw from Ekowe if he thought necessary, but in any case to be prepared to have the whole Zulu force down upon him.

Colonel Pearson assembled all his staff and company officers for a council of war, and by a small majority it was decided to hold on where they were, as it was considered that it might have a good moral effect and afford protection to that part of the colony immediately behind them.

The sad history of Isandhlwana cast a gloom over all; the destruction of the 24th Regiment, the gallantry of Melville and Coghill, the determined stand of the troops against overwhelming odds were in all men's mouths. Tom Shervinton, who was in No. 1 Column, wrote home :—

“You will have heard how the 2nd Column has been cut to pieces. Our loss was 800 Europeans and 3,000 natives, with 105 wagons and two 7-pounder guns which Captain Stuart Smith had spiked, and was shot while spiking the second. Lord Chelmsford with Colonel Glyn had come on with a flying column to attack the enemy, leaving Colonel Durnford and Colonel Pulleine in charge of the convoy. The main body of enemy, numbering about 20,000, got between Lord Chelmsford and the convoy, came down on the convoy, and killed nearly all—a few cut their way through.

“The General heard from a native that camp was attacked, and hurried back with the wounded men, leaving orders for the remainder to come on imme-

diately. As he neared the camp he saw Commandant Lonsdale coming towards him at full gallop. Lonsdale told him the camp was in possession of the enemy—he had a very narrow escape. He rode up to the camp thinking all was right, seeing a lot of red-coats sitting around the tents, when a nigger came out of a tent, wearing a helmet and red coat, and a bloody assegai in his hand. He then saw they were all niggers, wheeled his horse round, and galloped off and told the General, who waited for reinforcements and retook the camp, but the enemy had burnt all the tents. The Zulus got 800 Martini-Henry rifles, with all the ammunition and stores for the whole column.

“Our column had an engagement on the same day. We were just going to outspan in a very wooded and hilly country at the Inyezane.

“The 3rd Buffs were in advance, with two companies Natal Native Contingent flanking them on the right. Our natives saw the Zulus first and attacked them. The Zulus came on in overwhelming masses before the Buffs could come up. They killed two lieutenants and four non-commissioned officers in one company alone. The enemy lost 300 counted dead, but they carry such a lot away. One of the chiefs we got (he had lost an arm and leg from a shell) said 5,000 of his own men were engaged.

“Captain Hart, our staff-officer, behaved splendidly. Everybody says it is a miracle he was not shot—he was such a mark. Our helmets are tan-colour, the 2nd Battalion Natal Native Contingent wear a blue veil twisted round, the 1st wear red;

Captain Hart, being staff-officer to both, wears the two entwined.

"They marched on to Ekowe, about 35 miles from here, built a fort, and not having enough food for all our 2,000 natives were sent back with 350 mounted men. Charlie is with the column at Ekowe—he got leave to stay if he liked—he is our senior captain. My company was left behind to guard the drift on the Tugela with 45 of the *Tenedos* men, one company of the 99th, and 400 natives. There is no communication with Ekowe at present.

"In Cape Colony they expect the Gaikas and Gaelikas to break out again, and the Pondos, Bomvanos, and Tamboukis have joined them. The Fingoes still remain loyal. Mohappo in the Orange Free State has broken out, and so have the Corrunas. The Kaffirs are leaving the Diamond Fields in numbers. If we do not get powerful reinforcements from England soon it will take South Africa (and Natal) all her time to hold her own. In the 1st and 3rd Natal Native Contingent 78 officers and non-commissioned officers were killed out of a total of 90.

"The presence of H.M.S. *Tenedos* and *Active* in St. Lucia's Bay has awed the natives considerably. They are the first ships that have been there, and they cannot understand the boat-loads of armed men 'coming out of the holes in the wall.' . . ."

Meanwhile the construction of the fort at Ekowe was being pushed on with all speed. It was situated in a beautiful part of the country,

amply supplied with water, and surrounded by orange and banana groves, all of which had to be destroyed in order to give a good range. A great variety of flowers grew in the kloofs and Shervinton was never without a bouquet in his shed.

The fort was six-angled, 60 yards wide, with a deep ditch studded thickly with assegai heads, and the parapets were proof against musketry or field artillery. Ranges were carefully marked, and every man had a place assigned to him. Outlying pickets were thrown out at night to a distance of nearly five miles. Ekowe was commanded at short range on three sides, and close to it were dangerous ravines which afforded cover to the enemy.

In order to reduce the number of mouths to be fed Colonel Pearson decided to send back the whole of the mounted troops attached to his column, together with the Native Contingent, about 3,000 men in all, keeping at Ekowe 1,260 men, composed of the Buffs, 99th, Naval Brigade, Royal Artillery, Army Service Corps, and 350 natives.

As there was reason to believe that the departing troops were taking back private supplies Colonel Pearson had their wagons officially searched, and a quantity of food, medicines, and medical comforts were thus added to the stock. Eventually all articles of luxury were sold by auction and fetched enormous prices: matches, 4s. a box; pickles, 15s. a bottle; tobacco, 30s. a pound. About £7 worth realised upwards of £100. The supplies held out well, in spite of the discovery of a quantity of rotten biscuits and flour, and, with the reduced

ration on which the troops were put, would have enabled them to hold out till April 10th.

On the departure of the mounted troops for the Tugela communication with the outside world entirely ceased, and out of twelve men of the Native Contingent who had been sent with despatches early in February only one escaped with his life.

At first the health of the troops was good, but in February the percentage of sickness had largely increased, and when they were relieved on April 4th, there were 9 officers and nearly 100 men on the sick list, some of these afterwards died.

Colonel Pearson says in his despatch : "Most unaccountably no attempt was ever made at night to capture the cattle, or to annoy us inside the fort. Had it been otherwise the men would have been so harassed from want of sleep that the works would have been materially delayed, and the sick list largely increased. I am proud to say that without exception no officer, non-commissioned officer, or private behaved otherwise than with credit to the British Army. From first to last the men showed an excellent spirit, the highest discipline was maintained, and the reduction of food never grumbled at."

V

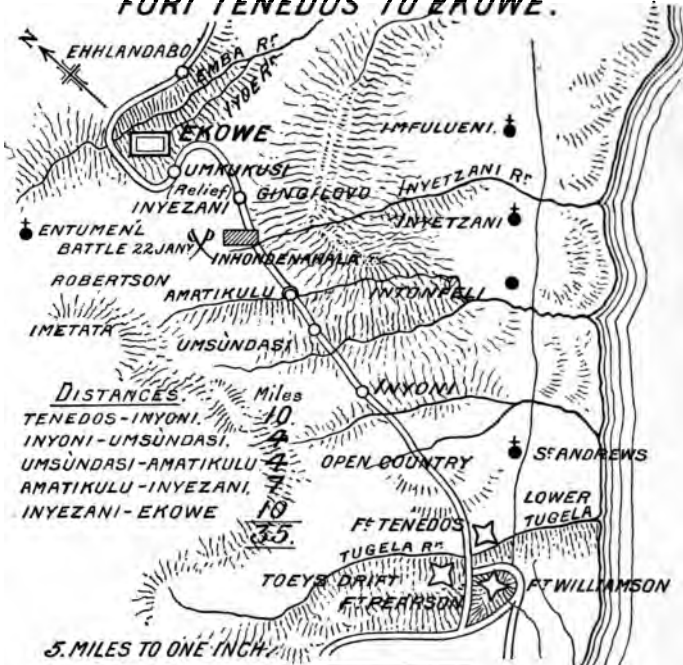
THE SIEGE OF EKOWE

A FEW extracts from Shervinton's letters and diary will tell the story of the beleaguered fort.

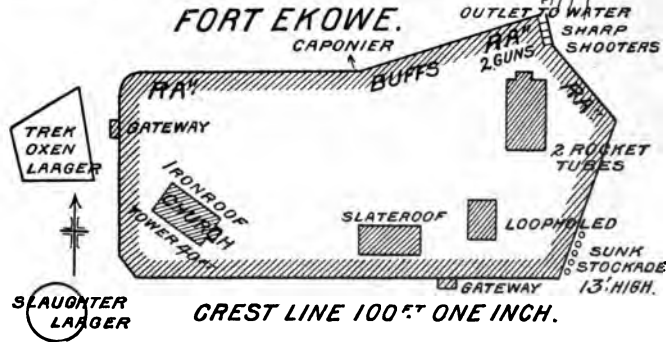
"We crossed the Tugela some days ago ; I brought over the right wing of our battalion. An express came from Colonel Pearson to push on with all despatch, and all wagons that we could not bring we were to destroy. Twenty extra spans were sent to help us, but we were compelled to leave eight wagons and their loads of provisions on the road. The rear-guard succeeded in reaching Ekowe at 8.30 p.m. It was one of the hardest marches I ever had. We started at 4 a.m., and pushed the whole way to Ekowe with but one short halt of forty-five minutes. The men had to be helped into the wagons utterly knocked up, and the officers only kept on foot to encourage the men.

"When we got in, although we had eaten nothing all day, we threw ourselves down in the first corner, hoping for a little rest. But there was a cry, 'Stand to your arms !' and we were instantly at our posts. It turned out to be only a few Zulus prowling round,

FORT TENEDOS TO EKOWE.



FORT EKOWE.



MAP OF EKOWE.

and we soon lay down again. With daybreak we were at work, strengthening our position, officers and men working side by side, and often looking wistfully at our portmanteaux or other baggage being piled up as a traverse for some exposed corner.

"I commanded the natives at first, but now I am attached to the Mounted Infantry, who do all the reconnaissance and that sort of thing. It was raised by volunteers from the Buffs and 99th, and horses 'borrowed' from officers of the garrison. We often exchange shots, and still oftener have to gallop for it.

"We go out at 4.30 a.m. : Rowden of the 99th taking half the troops to patrol one side of the country, and I the remainder on the other side. We then post our videttes and take it in turn to visit the posts every hour. The posts are four in number, and from 800 yards to a mile from each corner of the camp.

"I am afraid you will not be able to read much of this, but I am writing on my haversack, lying on my chest, with any amount of thorns running into me.

"Ours is the only column in Zululand. The General telegraphed to Colonel Pearson to use his discretion, as this was the only column over the border. I don't think we are likely to be attacked, but the Colonel heard that the whole Zulu army (supposed to be 40,000 or 50,000 men) were concentrating to attack this column, so I think he did a very plucky thing in remaining with so few men (1,260). Every officer that was killed in the 24th Regiment I knew, and several I had been to school

with. Cetewayo has simply defeated and out-manceuvred us in every way. How it will end I don't know, but you may be sure we shall all die hard.

"I was very lucky to have stayed up, it may lead to something in the future, but it seems ridiculous to talk of the future in our position.

"We had a smart brush the other day ; we lost 15 killed (some died of their wounds) and 20 wounded. Captain Fitzroy Hart is one of the very best staff officers I ever met, a general favourite, and plucky into the bargain.

"There is a great deal of sickness among the men, and we have made a sanatorium of bushes on a hill opposite the fort, 400 yards off. A guard is posted there, and the sick are carried out for fresh air every morning.

"The real cause of sickness is the constant exposure, one day to the sun and next day to the rain, then turning in dripping wet, with the rain or a cold wind beating in underneath the wagons. We all sleep under wagons, as no tents are pitched. The covers are stretched out on either side, something like two verandahs.

"We grind down the Indian corn into meal, and it makes excellent porridge, but it is hard work and we all do our share, so as to relieve our servants, who have their own interests to look after as well as their masters'. Pumpkin-pie is very nice with lime-juice and sugar added, but we have to save our ration of sugar for several days before such a luxury can be decently hinted at. At a sale milk fetches

£1 a tin, curry powder £1 3s. a bottle, 12 lbs. of ham £6 5s., and other things in proportion. It is wonderful how everybody keeps up their spirits, the bluejackets especially. Many a time have I seen the water rushing through their shed, carrying away blankets, boots, and everything movable, but this only makes Jack Tar sing the louder.

"A wet day is always a regular field-day for Captain Cotton, 99th, at our tobacco. We have scraped together a few dirty mouldy cakes, which we mix with the better ones to make our scanty stock hold out. Cotton has manufactured a tobacco-cutter, and spends his wet mornings in chopping up the tobacco—a most tedious process with his clumsy but invaluable machine.

"The only difference between Sundays and other days is Church parade at 6.30 a.m. so as not to interfere with the day's work. At first Moody and Sankey's hymn 'Hold the Fort,' was always played by the band. The bands of the Buffs and 99th play alternately every afternoon, since the work about the fort began to slacken—before that the bandsmen had to take their regular turn of duty with the others. We were glad when our baggage was restored to us and sods put in its place.

"The sickness is increasing, and medicine running short. Our ration of bread has been reduced to 6 ozs. of flour and two biscuits a day, but the want of tobacco is felt far more than the short rations.

"The excitement of the whole camp may be imagined when they first signalled to us from Tugela by looking-glass.

"We had been three weeks without any news from the outer world, when one Sunday a bright flash was seen in the direction of the Tugela. We knew what it was at once, for we had often talked about it. It took us two days before we could make out clearly what they said, but after that we improved rapidly, and at the end of a week had manufactured a signalling machine for ourselves out of a looking-glass and an ammunition box, and began asking questions.

"Our first message from the Tugela was that Colonel Law would advance to our assistance on March 13th, with 1,000 troops and 1,000 natives, when we were to be prepared to sally out with what troops we could spare and meet him.

"We immediately set to work to cut a more direct road to Inyezane, and while occupied on it, had several skirmishes with the enemy, who came down in such force one morning that we had to retire, and they always followed us up in the evening when we knocked off work. We got rather sick of this, so one evening the engineers put down 18 ozs. of dynamite at the point where we had left off working, and a friction tube connected with a pole stuck in the ground. We had hardly left it when about 30 Zulus came down, saw the pole with 'Torpedo' written on it, and at once tried to pull it up. It took three or four to do it, and up it came, blowing about six Zulus to pieces and frightening the others out of their wits. The moral effect was excellent, and they never interfered with our work again.

"About the same time the Zulus began annoying

our outposts, and one morning about fifteen of them jumped up out of the long grass, and fired a volley into one of the men, Carson of the 99th. He was wounded in five places and his horse assailed, but he managed to get away, and rode into camp. He had two fingers shot away, a bullet through the wrist, another through both thighs, and his back lacerated by a ball which glanced off his carbine. The doctors pronounced his wounds severe, but not dangerous.

I was at breakfast one morning when I heard shots in the direction of No. 4 vidette post. I rushed out and found a man galloping in, who told me Private Kent, 99th, was shot. I took his horse from him and rode out to the post, and saw Kent's horse walking in covered with blood; no one had seen him fall. I galloped to the spot where the shots came from, but could see nothing. I was joined by some videttes from another post. We found Kent's body lying in the grass with sixteen assegai wounds all in front. He must have fallen off when his horse was shot and got up and run, but finding the Zulus ran faster, turned round and tried to defend himself. He was a very good man, and we were all sorry for him.

"We made a patrol one morning to Dabulamanzi's military kraal, and after shelling and burning it we returned to camp, about six miles off, followed to within a mile and a half of the fort by Dabulamanzi on horseback and some 300 of his men, who fired on us from every bush and kloof. His private kraal was only a mile farther,

but so difficult of access and the enemy in such force that Colonel Pearson decided we had done enough. . . ."

Colonel Pearson now signalled to Lord Chelmsford that his last raid had been successful, but that if the relieving column were by any chance delayed, he was determined that nothing should prevent his making a sortie for liberty and life.

Lord Chelmsford now started on his way with a large force to relieve Ekowe. The native levies were only reduced to obedience with the threat that all deserters would be shot.

They crossed the Tugela in heavy rain on March 30th, and the following day crossed the Amatikulu river. Lord Chelmsford had signalled that 500 men were to make a sally from the fort if the relieving column should be attacked, and in fact they were attacked at Ghingilovo by 10,000 Zulus. This could be seen from Ekowe, which was only fifteen miles distant from Ghingilovo, but the impracticable nature of the ground made it impossible to reach it under several hours. Meanwhile the battle raged for an hour and a half. The Zulus lost 1,200 men; the British 9 killed and 52 wounded.

Lord Chelmsford left part of his men to garrison Ghingilovo while he pushed on with a flying column, and on the evening of April 3rd Colonel Pearson with 500 men met him at the commencement of their new road.

The relieving column were delighted with the appearance of the fort, especially the cemetery, which was enclosed by a palisade of bamboo;



each grave had a name carved on a wooden cross at its head, with wreaths and crosses of immortelles on it. Four officers and twenty-seven men had died here.

Next morning Dabulamanzi's family kraal was destroyed, and on the 5th of April the garrison marched out of Ekowe, having previously destroyed the greater portion of the works.

There is little doubt that had Colonel Pearson gone down when he was given the choice, it would have had a most damaging effect on British prestige; by remaining he prevented the Zulus from bursting into Natal, as they were afraid of the troops in their rear destroying their kraals and perhaps cutting off their retreat.

Cetewayo was very anxious to know why they were signalling from Ekowe, and one day he sent to ask. He said that if the troops wished to go down they might, and he would order his impeys not to molest them, but they must not touch his mealie gardens. The natives said that this primitive monarch was very angry that his cattle could not go out further to graze, as they were getting very poor from being so much cooped up, and they constantly shouted out to know what was being signalled, and to ask what road they were coming down by.

Colonel Pearson says in his despatch :—

“By day the picket duties were performed by a small vidette corps, formed by a few men of the Mounted Infantry and Natal Volunteers, and organised by Lieutenant Rowden, 99th Regiment, and

Captain Shervinton, Native Contingent. I cannot speak too highly of the careful and zealous way in which this responsible duty was done, and which I consider reflects much credit on the officers above named, as well as those under their command. These videttes were constantly under fire.

"I wish to mention a circumstance which I think reflects great credit upon Captain Shervinton, and the under-mentioned men—Corporal Adams, Native Contingent ; Privates Whale, Robson, Higley and Keys, 99th Regiment, and Trooper Garlands, Victoria Mounted Rifles.

"The videttes shortly after our arrival at Ekowe were daily annoyed when they patrolled in the morning before finally taking up their posts, by the fire of a party of Zulus from a high hill. It was believed that this party took up their position very early in the morning, and Captain Shervinton and the above party volunteered to go out at night and lie in wait for them behind some rocks near the top of the hill, being utterly ignorant however of the number of the Zulus. I consented, and this little expedition resulted in three Zulus being wounded (though not so seriously as to prevent their making good their escape), and the videttes never being annoyed from this hill again. In fact, no Zulus were ever after seen there."

An incident of the siege is thus described by Private Brookes, 99th Regiment :—

"At Ekowe on or about March 4th, I and two other men proceeded to No. 4 vidette post under command of Captain Shervinton. When ten yards

from the post, about 30 Zulus jumped up and fired a volley at us. The two other men's horses took fright and bolted, whilst my horse threw me, and my foot caught in the stirrup. The Zulus rushed to within five or six yards of me, and were about to assegai me when Captain Shervinton mounted, dashed forward and the Zulus bolted. He put me on his horse, and ordered me to get under a tree under cover whilst he went back on foot and picked up my rifle and helmet, under heavy fire of the enemy. Whilst this happened, a hundred or more Zulus appeared on the top, some 200 yards away, and also opened fire upon us."

Shervinton said that he was on the point of bolting too, when he saw Brookes lying on the ground and the Zulus rushing in to assegai him. By the time he had rescued him, the other two men had pulled up their horses and were returning, so he desired them to cover him with their carbines while he searched for the missing rifle. It took him a few moments to find it, and it was wonderful that he escaped unhurt, as the bullets were pitching all round him.

VI

TWO BROTHERS IN SOUTH AFRICA

AS Shervinton passed through Tugela on his way down from Ekowe, he met his brother Tom, and remarked that he was still coughing, and could not think what was the matter with him. Apparently Tom was much disgusted at missing the big fight at Ghingilovo, but the commandant told Shervinton that he always left him behind, as three wet nights without any covering would be his death.

On this occasion Tom wrote a very angry letter to the commandant on the subject—he was most indignant at being left behind—however, no notice was taken. The dying boy was a universal favourite with officers and men, and all wished to spare him needless hardship and suffering. His pluck and spirit were so great that it was only towards the very end that Charlie realised the seriousness of his condition.

All the time that the garrison had been shut up in Ekowe, Tom had been at the drift on the Tugela. There was little going on, the Zulus hovered round, but were careful to keep out of range. They had a



T. R. M. SHERVINTON.
1880.

few false alarms, one day they threw shells and worked the Gatling gun for half an hour. However, the only casualties were a horse shot by the sentry, and two natives severely cut by their own assegais in their hurry to tumble inside the fort! one cut in the arm and the other in the leg—but natives soon recover from their wounds, and are wonderfully enduring. An escort bringing down empty wagons picked up a Zulu shot in the right arm and leg; he had been lying in the bush for four days without food or water. They put him in a wagon and took off his arm and leg which seemed to give him relief.

Affairs at the Tugela were not always pleasant. The disaster at Isandhlwana had greatly shaken the confidence of the natives in the British, and they deserted in large numbers.

All the natives deserted from the camp at the Tugela drift with the exception of the companies of Captains Welsh and Davies—the latter being Tom Shervinton's captain. This left no one to do the work except the non-commissioned officers; and Major G. issued an order on parade that officers were to do fatigue duty with the non-commissioned officers who had mutinied and refused to serve under Major G. The officers were most indignant at the order, and appealed to Major Coates and to Lieutenant Kingscote, R.N., who was in command. They said they never heard of such a thing, but advised them to do it under protest and report to the General.

After a time the natives of the other two companies went away, saying that they were only going

because all the others had gone, but when they were sent for they would return, as they liked their officers very much. The non-commissioned officers refused to serve under any one except Commandant Nettleton, Captain Davies, and Lieutenant Shervinton. However, things settled down in time.

Charlie Shervinton left Ekowe on April 5th with the General's column, reached the Tugela on the 7th, and Durban on the 9th. Here, to his astonishment, he ran against his brother Will, who had just arrived and joined "Lonsdale's Horse," a corps raised in Cape Colony by Commandant Lonsdale. Will simply stared at him, not recognising him in the least, for he was considerably pulled down by the long-protracted siege, and had also grown a beard, which greatly changed his appearance.

The three brothers were known at the Cape as "the handsome Shervintons."

After all the excitement of the siege Shervinton found life very dull in Durban, as extracts from his diary will show.

"April 12th.—It's getting slower and slower ; very few of the Ekowe garrison are down on leave. Captain Wynne and four men died on the march down. I'm living in a bell-tent, my other having been sent for by its owner.

"13th, *Easter Sunday*.—Got up at 6 a.m. with the idea of going to church, but found none of the churches open at 7 a.m. Heard the bells ringing at 8, so made a bolt and just got in time.

"14th.—Shops all shut and nothing to be done all day—it's a positive struggle to exist in this place.

"16th.—Shops open at last, thank goodness ! but there's not much I want to buy, and no place to put things when they are bought. I've got to turn out of my tent again, confound it ! and go into another for which I've had to give a receipt.

"17th.—I'm to give up my new tent now for the hospital. My luck is dead out.

"18th.—Nothing doing all day, and the town is getting empty. Sold my black mare for £35. I was a fool not to ask £40.

"20th.—Nothing doing."

Shervinton could not stand this sort of life very long, so he started for the Tugela, but found nothing going on there. A convoy was to start for Fort Crealock, so he went with it, and seemed to cheer up when he found there was work to be done. Fort Crealock was then being built, and took longer than they expected, as they had to revet the parapets and banquette.

But here the life was very different to Ekowe ; there was plenty to eat and drink, and not too much to do ; there was good bathing in the river, and the country swarmed with game.

A party under Captain Guinness, which went out foraging, brought back a bundle of snake-skins measuring from fifteen to thirty-five feet in length. The skin of a boa-constrictor measured thirty-five feet in length and four feet in width at the thickest part. Shervinton suffered a good deal from rheumatism from sleeping so much in the wet, but he found that an active life was the best remedy, and a row on the river often did it good.

It was a healthy place, and one week no less than 128 sick were sent from Fort Chelmsford to recruit.

Shervinton was one of the very few officers who had not been ill either at Ekowe or after leaving it; several died, and others took a long time to recover their health.

The Natal native contingent had now been put into scarlet and their name changed to the Natal Native Infantry. All three brothers were in the same column. Tom was still at Fort Tenedos, where a medical board was to assemble to report upon his health. Shervinton was on the march from Fort Chelmsford, and Tom rode out a few miles to meet him.

Everybody made quite certain that Tom would be invalided—for one thing he had almost completely lost his voice. However, the medical board left it to the commandant to decide whether he should be invalided or not. The commandant asked Shervinton what his wishes were, but he preferred not to interfere. Shortly afterwards Tom joined him at Fort Crealock, and seemed better for a time. Charlie writes from there :—

“The roads are still very heavy and simply strewn with dead oxen, which we continually send out parties to bury. There is a probability of marching next week on a three months’ campaign; 91st have been asked if they are ready, and replied ‘Yes, when we get some new boots.’ There is not a moment’s peace in this confounded place. I have 400 men here and I don’t think I could find 50 at this

moment. They are all either on fatigue or picket or something. Tom and I are the only two in camp.

"What a sad thing about the Prince Imperial ! and what a chance thrown away ! He could have been saved so easily. But my experience is that very few men are equal to a scare. I'm certain if our troops came to a real stand-up, hand-to-hand fight with a superior force of Zulus, they'd get the worst of it. They dread the assegai—and it's equal to two bayonets any day. I don't think our troops are cowards, for I believe any other European army would feel the same."

On the same subject Tom wrote :—

"You will have heard the sad news of the Prince Imperial's death. It seems that he went out sketching with Lieutenant C. and six troopers of Bettington's Horse. They off-saddled in a mealie field, and a Kaffir who went with them told the Prince the Zulus were coming. They saddled their horses, and were just going to mount when a volley was fired into them from among the mealies. The Prince's horse, being difficult to mount at any time, was quite scared ; all the others, except two, managed to mount and get away. The Prince hung on to his holster, but that gave away, and he was assegai'd, the two troopers also. It is the most disgraceful affair that has happened throughout the war. I should not care to be in Lieutenant C.'s shoes ; he must be a wretched funk to leave the Prince, or even any of the troopers, behind. The Lancers and Dragoons went out next day to get his body."

The following is a letter from the *Times* headed "A Contrast" :—

"On March 1st a column of troops under Colonel Pearson were returning home from burning a kraal belonging to Dabulamanzi, in the neighbourhood of Ekowe. Their march was covered by an advance guard of some dozen irregular horse. These having galloped to a mealie field which lay in the route of the column, drove the Zulus out and received the order to gallop off to another point which the enemy were waiting for. The party galloped away accordingly, but finding a riderless horse following them their commander, Lieutenant (Captain) Shervinton halted them and himself came back with the led horse to the mealie field, in which he found his comrade preparing to meet the fate which had so sadly befallen the Prince Imperial, but which Lieutenant Shervinton, in the nature of his duty merely, saved him from. Comment is needless.—ONE PRESENT, A. and N. Club."

Here is the last letter that Tom wrote from camp :—

"FORT CREALOCK, AMATIKULU,

"June 18, 1879.

"I have not seen Will yet, but I expect he will be up here in a week. We are just going to advance on a three months' trip, and hope to get up to the King's kraal. The Naval Brigade arrived here this morning, and the 88th and 57th left for Fort Chelmsford on the Inyezane River. I met a fellow in the 99th I knew at home, and he did not recognise me, he said I was so burnt and altered. We don't have

much time here to ourselves ; we are either out after cattle or burying dead cattle—poor brutes, they have a rough time of it, and are dying by scores. Horses are not dying so much now. In the last four months I've lost three horses. I've got my fourth now, and I hope he won't die, for I don't know where I should get another—there are none to be had.

“Charlie is in command of four of our companies here ; we expect the others up to-morrow and then we all move off. There is a talk of our having to lead the way and clear the bush. I expect there will be a few vacant commissions when we come out of it.

“29th. FORT CHELMSFORD.

“The day after I last wrote we got an hour's notice to march to Fort Chelmsford, where all the army were encamped. We arrived the same day, crossed the Inyezane River and laagered on a hill about a mile from the fort. Two days later all moved on about twelve miles to the Emlalasse, except the 88th and us (280 natives). Charlie marched with his company and part of Captain Hall's, two days ago, leaving me alone with 150 men and three companies 80th.

“To-day I sent the remaining part of Hall's company (70 men) to join him in the Emlalasse, so I'm here with only my company (80 men). Will is at the Tugela with his troop of Lonsdale's Horse. All the troops have moved from Emlalasse to Fort Durnford. Some chiefs came in yesterday with an elephant's tusk, some cattle, women and children as

a peace-offering. Whilst talking about terms a telegram arrived saying 6,000 Zulus had crossed the Tugela into Natal, killed a lot of natives, and taken away a lot of cattle, women, and children. The embassy was a mere ruse on the part of the Zulus to enable them to cross the border. I hope you will be able to read this, but I am writing under difficulties. As soon as I get hold of my pen some order for fatigue or searching for cattle comes in, and I have to scull away. The remainder of my battalion arrived here yesterday, and we expect to move up and join Charlie to-morrow. There are 200 sick soldiers here, and they go down to the Tugela to-morrow. This column is the unhealthiest of the three, but I myself have been as lively as a kitten ever since I came here. Nearly every one seems to get sick here, especially men just out from England, but I think I had my share in the old colony.

"We have just received orders to march at a minute's notice."

But Tom's marching days were over. The commandant insisted upon his taking sick leave, and instead of going into hospital Tom took his horse and went riding about the country, and finally turned up in an ambulance at Durban, seriously ill, and was at once taken to hospital.

All three brothers were now in Durban. Charlie arrived in September, having ridden the whole way by the Tugela, leading a spare horse, without being molested, which showed how quiet the country had become. Cetewayo had just been caught by Major Marter. All the Zulus along the road stopped Sher-

vinton to ask if it were really true. He came past Ekowe by the old road which had long since been abandoned. At the Umsindusi River he got into quicksands and very nearly lost his two valuable horses.

He had been given various certificates by different officers with whom he had served ; a couple will suffice :—

From COMMANDANT NETTLETON, N.N.I.

“DURBAN, *October 21, 1879.*

“Captain Shervinton served at Ekowe as an officer of mounted infantry, in which capacity he specially distinguished himself. He is a smart, intelligent officer, and has an intimate knowledge of the duties required from mounted forces.”

From CAPTAIN FITZROY HART, 31st Regiment.

“NATAL, *September 27, 1879.*

“I found Captain Shervinton always most attentive to his duties, very intelligent in performing his part, and ever untiring in his efforts to carry out his instructions well. The commanding officer chose him out of many good officers for adjutant of his battalion, but this appointment he could not hold with the rank of captain. He has served continuously throughout the whole Zulu war from first to last. He was one of the force under Colonel Pearson at Ekowe, and his good services there have been noted elsewhere. He possesses a strong and hardy physique, and his conduct so far as it has come under my notice and knowledge has been exemplary.”

Shervinton was greatly grieved and shocked to find Tom so ill, and for the first time realised that he was actually dying. He got several military doctors to see him, as well as the best civil surgeon in the place. They all agreed that it would be certain death to send him home at that time of year, and recommended the Orange Free State, the only question being his fitness to travel, for he was then far too weak. Shervinton was anxious to take him away to some cooler place and look after him, but it was considered better on the whole to leave him where he was.

When the hospital was closed, Tom was removed to the house of his cousins, the Munros, who nursed him with the most devoted tenderness until his death on February 21, 1880—aged twenty-one years. His medal with clasps, 1877-8, was received nearly two years after his death.

VII

THE BASUTO WAR

ON March 4, 1880, a fortnight after Tom's death, Shervinton received from Lord Wolseley his commission as Captain in the Cape Mounted Rifles, Left Wing, in recognition of his services in Zululand.

The original Cape Mounted Rifles, which had done good service at the Cape and on the Frontier, had been disbanded for some years, and a fine body of police, which has been compared to the Irish Constabulary, afforded local protection in less troubled times.

In 1879 the Government changed their name from the "Frontier Armed Police Force," to the "Cape Mounted Rifles," turning them into a cavalry regiment. The men—who had not been consulted—resented this; they were engaged as armed police, and not as cavalymen. With the exception of the artillery, dépôt, and No. 8 troop, the whole force mutinied, and more than two-thirds demanded their discharges; about eighty obtained it, and many deserted, refusing to serve under their new name.

Severe punishment followed. The police at King William's Town (50 men) were made prisoners, with the Transkei Rifles (late Pulleine's Rangers) to mount guard over them. All the troops were sentenced to from three to six months on the break-water, except No. 6 troop (90 men), who put themselves on sick report. Rows became frequent. A number of natives were attached to the Frontier Armed Mounted Police at King William's Town, and they could not get on with the English. The natives attacked the whites with knobkerries, and were beaten, upon which both sides had recourse to firearms, and a native was killed. Ten Englishmen were sent to prison to stand their trial for murder, and there was great indignation.

In those early days the Cape Mounted Rifles were considered a very rough lot, but as an officer wrote of them, "None but a rough lot in the ranks could put up with the neglect and hardships they suffered for a very long time." It was said that no officer cared to venture into their barrack-room at night, where drink was plentiful and weapons handy, but one night, soon after Shervinton joined, when there was an extra row going on, he walked in among them with merely his little riding-whip in his hand, and looking round said quietly, "Send your best man here." They did so, and he thrashed their champion while not a protest was made.

Shervinton was at first considered a little severe as a Captain of Colonial troops, and the Cape papers were not behindhand in pointing this out, but in after-days they quite changed their opinions, for

then the Cape Mounted Riflemen had become the best drilled and the best disciplined, as well as the most dashing of the Cape regiments. And how proud Shervinton was of them his letters show. He was now moved up with his new regiment to Kokstadt, in South Griqualand. Here he was laid up for some time with fever and ague. His health was never again quite so good as before the siege of Ekowe, and he never regained his original weight. He now only weighed eleven stone in full uniform, and much less in thin clothes. At Kokstadt he was Captain of the Cricket, Football, and Rifle Clubs, so had plenty of occupation.

Two of his men deserted from here with their horses and ammunition, and Shervinton had to pay £81 for them, the amount of their debt to Government. One of his best horses, too, was killed by lightning. In the course of three years he lost altogether fourteen horses, three being shot under him in action.

The attitude of the Basutos was now giving rise to much uneasiness. A war with them was likely to be a serious and lengthy affair, and the Tambookies and Tembus had joined them.

The Basutos were considered the most intelligent race of natives in South Africa—far better armed than the Zulus, and excellent shots.

The cause of their discontent was the Disarmament Act. They loved their rifles, and had worked hard for them—in most cases they had been given to them instead of wages—and bitterly they resented the order to give them up, especially as they had

once been our allies, many of their chiefs having taken up arms to aid us in suppressing the rebellion of Morosi.¹

This rebellion (1879) had followed the levying of the hut-tax, and was gradually dying out when the new Act fanned the expiring flames. It was now thought necessary to make active preparations—new volunteer corps were raised, and regular troops ordered out from home.

The Cape Mounted Riflemen—650 strong—were all under orders for Basutoland. The Right Wing was commanded by Colonel Bayley, and the Left Wing by Colonel Carrington, C.M.G., well known as "Fighting Fred."

Shervinton, with his men, was sent from Kokstad to Basutoland, and as there was no grass on the direct line, and no wheeled transport could be taken by that route, they had to make a considerable *détour*, going round by Umtata, where they picked up 70 men of the Right Wing. It took over a week to get to Umtata, and four weeks from there to Basutoland.

The march was a long and trying one, and the horses suffered considerably. Shervinton's horses kept fairly well, but then he had four, and was on the look-out for a fifth. The men themselves were in excellent spirits, and hoping for a lively time.

At Palmeitfontein they found the Basutos in arms on the opposite bank of the river. They had their

¹ Some of my information has been obtained from Mr. James Grant's "Recent British Battles."

outlying pickets on the watch, and had dug rifle-pits, and built stone walls all along the river-bank. However, they did not attack, and the Cape Mounted Rifles crossed the Orange Free State into Basutoland.

Their orders were to entrench themselves at Mafeting, which was only ten miles over the border, and was being held by the magistrate, Mr. Barkly, with about 200 Native Police.

Mafeting was reached on September 13th.

Shervinton, who was in command of the advanced guard of 40 men, was attacked two miles from Mafeting by about 600 mounted Basutos.

The Cape Mounted Rifles got in among some stones, and kept them off until reinforcements arrived, when the enemy bolted, leaving twelve men killed.

Mafeting was reached, after this brush, at 11 a.m., but Shervinton had to start again immediately with the troops to seize some of the enemy's wagons, a few miles off. They got three wagons, but had to abandon one of them, as the Basutos came down in great force. However, they succeeded in getting in with two wagons, five prisoners, and a lot of sheep and cattle, which were sold for £400—the money, of course, going to Government, and some horses which they took being kept for remounts.

Shervinton had scarcely got back from this little affair, when he had to start off in another direction to reinforce a troop that was in difficulties. He took out some spare ammunition; the enemy was beaten off, and they got back to camp about

7.30 p.m. Next day, and the next, much the same sort of thing went on, so that four horses were by no means too many, but in a couple of days they had cleared out most of the rebel villages in the immediate neighbourhood.

A newspaper of the day thus describes Mafeting :
"The first sight of Mafeting is decidedly pleasing. After travelling for many miles through the dreary, brown, parched veldt, you suddenly become aware, at a distance of a mile and a half, of a cluster of green trees and clean, whitewashed houses.

"The village is situated at the foot of a pointed hill ; the other extremity of the high ridge terminates in a rounded hill, close to which is the kraal and stronghold of the rebel chief, Lerothodi.

"Mafeting consists of the magistrate's (Mr. Barkly's) residence, the Court House, the Police Barracks, a store, and three or four houses occupied by Europeans, and twenty or thirty huts inhabited by natives.

"The magistrate's house stands about 150 yards from the foot of the hill ; it is a brick, iron-roofed house, with a long, thatched mud building, generally used for bedrooms and offices, but now turned into a hospital for the sick and wounded. It is surrounded by a low mud wall, enclosing a well-stocked fruit and kitchen garden, and separated from it by a cattle kraal is the entrenched camp of the Cape Mounted Riflemen.

"At a distance of some 600 yards is the Court House, which is loopholed and sand-bagged, so as to form a fort of very considerable strength."

This fort, however, was garrisoned only by 200 Cape Mounted Rifles under Colonel Carrington, and 200 Native Police under the magistrate, Mr. Barkly.

Two days after the arrival of the Cape Mounted Rifles at Mafeting a patrol was sent out to attack the kraal of the chief Matsope.

Lieutenant Carstensen, with 25 men, was to attack the kraal in front, and Lieutenant Clarke, with 25 men, was to go round the mountain and attack it in rear, but the guide took him by a wrong path, so that he did not arrive in time. Lieutenant Carstensen carried the kraal from the front, but was then compelled to retire, as Lerothodi reinforced it with 200 men.

Reinforcements were sent to Carstensen's assistance under Shervinton and Barkly, and drove Lerothodi's men back over the crest of the hill, and destroyed all the villages on their side of Lerothodi's.

Two days later (September 17th) they had another brush with the enemy, which was thus described by a correspondent :—

"A party of forty men, under Captain Shervinton, were sent to reconnoitre a village about two miles from Mafeting, reported to be occupied by the enemy. He entered the village, and was almost immediately surrounded by about 800 men under Lerothodi, but made good his retreat into a very strong position, from which the enemy were unable to dislodge him, maintaining a position about 300 yards away.

"The enemy were receiving reinforcements from

Molitsane, amounting in a short time to about 600 men. A part of 15 men under Lieutenant Clarke were sent to support Captain Shervinton, and 15 more under Lieutenant McMullen took the enemy in flank, supported again by Colonel Carrington in person with another 30 men. Lieutenant Clarke charged the enemy, and thus enabled Captain Shervinton to evacuate his post and retire on Diphering.

"Lieutenant Clarke was charged by a large number of the enemy, and retreating, was killed whilst endeavouring most gallantly to bring out one of his wounded men, named Magee, who was also killed.

"Lieutenant McMullen meanwhile, by a very bold front and steady fire, had checked the advance of fully 400 men, and made things so hot for the rebels that they retreated till quite out of range, and thus enabled the whole body to retreat in good order.

"One of Captain Shervinton's videttes, Bernard White (Cape Mounted Rifles) was cut off and killed.

"Later in the day a party went out under Captain Shervinton, and recovered the bodies of Lieutenant Clarke and Privates Magee and White, which were interred with military honours on the 18th."

The cemetery was about 200 yards outside the camp, and here a stone with a simple inscription was erected by the comrades of the three young men.

Shervinton wrote home an account of this engagement, and towards the end of it he remarks :—

"If it had not been for the gallant charge of poor

young Clarke, and the plucky way McMullen kept them back with his troop, by showing a bold front and keeping up a steady fire, not one of my men would have escaped, unless they had chosen to evacuate the camp, and come out in force to our assistance.

"We killed from 20 to 30 men, and my troop only fired fifty rounds of ammunition. I never saw men behave better under fire than my own party. Although there was a rain of bullets on us the whole time, I would not allow a man to fire until I named him. As I never expected to get out with a single man, I was determined only to fire when they came within 100 yards of us.

"You can hardly imagine the pace these Basutos can go on their ponies, up and down hill, over rocks, at a breakneck pace; our horses are not in it with them.

"Most of them are better armed than we are, as they have Martini-Henrys and Westly-Richards rifles, while we have only Sniders and revolvers. I told the Colonial Secretary what I thought about our arms, and he is at any rate going to give us swords."

Shervinton got considerable "kudos" for the way in which he kept his post for two hours against 1,200 mounted Basutos, without wasting any ammunition, and with the loss only of one vidette. When he was first surrounded by 800 mounted men, he sent a man to gallop for all he was worth to camp and ask for reinforcements. The man was so knocked out of time that he could not explain what had happened, but the Colonel knew that Shervinton

must be in a serious hole by sending a man back, and at once sent out reinforcements. Shervinton had one rather narrow escape, as his field-glasses were shot out of his hand.

The engagement was witnessed from the camp by the Colonial Secretary, Mr. Sprigg, who had arrived that morning from Wepener, where he returned next day *en route* for Cape Town, so Shervinton had a good opportunity of pointing out to him the insufficiency of their arms.

The enemy could stand well out of reach of the Snider carbines, and shoot at 1,000 yards range. And the carbine once fired was for the moment useless, whilst the enemy could rush in with their assegais and battle-axes. This placed our men at a frightful disadvantage, and was the cause of more than one disaster, for it gave confidence to the Basutos, who knew that our men were comparatively defenceless in a hand-to-hand struggle.

The total fighting force of the Basutos was 40,000 men, half of whom were mounted, and the Government wished to put 13,000 men in the field against them.

The rations were now reduced, but even then there was only enough for twenty-seven days, and meat enough for nine days, so Shervinton proposed to kill thirty horses and make biltong, or dried meat. They were blockaded just as they were in Ekowe, and communication was entirely cut off with Maseru, where Colonel Bayly was entrenched with the Right Wing Cape Mounted Rifles.

On the morning of the 21st, at 10.30, Shervinton

was about a mile away from camp with two men (none of them armed) trying to get a heliograph he had made into working order. The cattle and horses were grazing within a few yards of them, when down swooped 1,000 mounted Basutos and swept off the cattle (about 90 head) and the sheep, as well as the horses of the Basuto Native Police.

Shervinton and his two men saved their own horses with the greatest difficulty, and barely escaped with their lives. Directly the cattle were captured about 8,000 mounted men attacked the camp. The charge was splendidly led by a well-mounted chief, and in the first rush they actually attempted to ride through the main street of Mafeting, but were checked by a heavy fire from the main schanzes, and their leader killed.

About 1 p.m. Lerothodi endeavoured to rush the village, but, finding himself between two cross-fires, took shelter under a wall with about 30 men, and was joined by 600 or 700 more, who stuck there resolutely, with the intention of rushing the schanzes at dark.

Seeing the situation, Colonel Carrington called for 25 volunteers to try and capture Lerothodi and dislodge the rebels.

"The required number were soon in the saddle," says the official report, "and then occurred the most dashing feat of the day. Headed by Captain Shervinton, sword in hand, the troops swept down on the rebels, who poured a volley on the advancing horsemen, and then broke and fled, taking Lerothodi with them."

A correspondent writes: "I must mention Captain Shervinton's name. He led a splendid charge of 20 gallant fellows to dislodge about 500 of the enemy, which he did in a most brilliant manner. Two of the Cape Mounted Rifles sustained severe falls in the charge."

Fighting continued from 11 a.m. until after dark—7 p.m.—when the enemy retired and went home to their chiefs, but these refused to receive them until they cleared out the defenders of Mafeting. The garrison remained under arms all night, expecting a renewal of the attack; but the enemy's loss had been too severe. There were parties carrying away their dead and wounded all day, but twenty dead were afterwards found and buried by the garrison.

In one place 59 of their horses were found lying dead after a charge and only three bodies, which shows how indefatigable they were in recovering their dead and wounded. Lerothodi's grey charger was left on the field, and no rejoicings were held, which was a sure sign that they had lost heavily, and that some important chief had probably fallen. Our casualties were only five men wounded, and four others struck by balls but not reported wounded. It was said that the chief Letsea must have assisted Lerothodi, although supposed to be loyal.

The fighting force at Mafeting consisted of only 290 men, white and black; 171 Cape Mounted Rifles, and 120 Native Police, besides a few volunteers. They now had to live on horseflesh, as all the cattle had been carried off; but these could have

been saved if Carrington had only had a gun. There were four wagon loads of food supplies at Massyn's, about seven miles from Mafeting, but there they had to remain.

The colonel now wished to send despatches to Maseru, and Shervinton at once volunteered to carry them, but Carrington preferred to keep him where he was. Captain Montagu, Cape Mounted Rifles, also volunteered, and got safely through, although he was fired on by the Basutos.

VIII

THE RELIEF OF MAFETING

THE enemy continued to hover round Mafeting, and large numbers remained in the neighbourhood, hoping to intercept the relieving column which was on its way under Brigadier-General Clarke.

On October 15th the Cape Mounted Rifles, under Colonel Carrington, destroyed the enemy's position facing Mafeting, and drove off over 1,000 Basutos.

Mohalies Hoek, which had been so gallantly held by Surmon with his little band, had been relieved on October 4th. On October 19th General Clarke crossed into Basutoland with about 1,800 men, consisting of the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Yeomanry, Cape Mounted Rifles, with two 7-pounder guns, Kimberley Horse, Capetown, Port Elizabeth, and Grahamstown Volunteers. They were fired on from time to time, but the guns soon caused the enemy to retire.

About 500 yards from Kalibani 120 Cape Mounted Yeomanry, under Captain Dalgety, were ordered to dislodge a body of the enemy. When within 300 yards they dismounted and advanced firing. A thousand mounted men charged down upon them,

and before the Cape Mounted Yeomanry could remount were in among them, stabbing right and left with their assegais. The confusion was indescribable: friends and foes, riderless horses and dismounted men, were all mingled together. The Yeomanry, in the absence of swords, having fired the first shot, were comparatively defenceless; 32 of them were killed and 6 wounded, four of whom afterwards died.

Captain Dalgety was at one time separated from his men by twenty yards, but with an empty carbine and a loaded revolver he managed to force his way through the assegais. A body of the 2nd Cape Mounted Yeomanry charged down to their assistance, and drove off the enemy, killing forty or fifty of them.

Nearly all the men we lost had been assegaied or struck down by battle-axes; had they been armed with swords this serious loss could not have occurred.

The enemy now cleared out, and General Clarke continued his march without further casualties, and reached Mafeting at 2 p.m., after nine hours in the saddle.

Colonel Carrington had sallied out with a part of the garrison and dislodged some of the enemy.

Mafeting was now reinforced with between 1,700 and 1,800 men and a month's rations.

On October 22nd General Clarke determined to take Lerothodi's stronghold, and 1,000 men, under Colonel Carrington, started at 3.30 a.m. to accomplish this, and returned completely successful at 4 p.m. From 6,000 to 8,000 Basutos were engaged, and it was reported by prisoners that they lost

about 600 men. They were led by the five sons of the chief Letsea.

In his despatch General Clarke says :—

“Large numbers of the enemy had occupied a rocky gorge on our right, and it was determined by Colonel Carrington to attempt to drive them out. This was done by the Cape Mounted Rifles and the P.A.V. Guard, reinforced by a portion of the Cape Town Volunteers. The whole then led by the Cape Mounted Rifles, under Captain Shervinton, charged the slit across the open ground in the most gallant manner, driving the enemy from it. Captains Birt and Shervinton were slightly wounded.

“On return to camp the General, in presence of the column, thanked the Volunteers, Cape Mounted Rifles, and Kimberley Horse for their brilliant conduct during the day. He likewise thanked Captain Shervinton and Major Lowe for the manner in which they led the storming parties, and also Colonel Carrington, who commanded the force.”

A correspondent writes : “Shervinton, the senior captain, sustained the name he has already won. It was simply miraculous that a large number of the charging party were not killed, as it was fully expected there would be heavy loss of life. The luck of the charge may be put down to its rapidity and determination.”

A man who was present on this occasion was desirous years after of joining Shervinton in Madagascar, and consulted Colonel Shervinton on the subject. Incidentally referring to the celebrated charge of the Cape Mounted Rifles, he said : “Your

son had a way of saying or of doing things that always took the men's fancy, and they would do anything and go anywhere with him. On the 22nd, when he received orders to take the donga at all hazards, there was some slight hesitation visible among the men. Shervinton perceived it, flung off his coat, rolled up his shirt-sleeves above the elbow, drew his sword, and dashed forward. The men instantly followed, and the whole of them literally 'jumped' into the donga on top of the Basutos."

Shervinton's own account is as follows :—

"Last Friday I led a storming-party, a charge mounted, and then a charge on foot. The latter was against about 1,000 niggers in a deep donga, and we did it under a fire from our front, flank, and rear ; had 20 men wounded, but none killed. I got an order from the General to take the donga at all hazards. He sent me 200 infantry, who ought to have led with fixed bayonets, but they wouldn't, so we gave them a lead with our carbines and revolvers, and took it with the infantry in support. We killed over 100 of the enemy, got a lot of horses, 200 rifles, and 2 prisoners.

"I am now laid up with a blow on the inside of my knee from a spent ball, but I can't help thinking I have strained or put it out as well, as there is inflammation of the joint, and the doctors have painted it with iodine and bandaged it up. It is my right knee this time ; when I came from India it was my left. However, I am going to take myself off the sick list in a day or two, as I am in command of my regiment, Colonel Carrington being

in command of a column, and our major sick and invalided."

On the 30th Moletsane's stronghold was attacked and taken, with a loss on our side of 5 killed, 9 wounded, and 2 missing. Shervinton was on his feet from 12 at night to 7 p.m. the following evening, except that he had his horse to ride out and back ; but all the hard work was done on foot.

This did his knee no good, and he was sent to the Base Hospital at Aliwal North, from which he wrote home :—

"It's awful work up here. I've been on the sick list altogether, and not out of my tent for the last week. I hope to go back at the end of this week, for this inaction is making me seedy, and I don't like being away from my men. The Cape Mounted Rifles are certainly the very finest body of men I've ever seen—bar none ; and they will follow their officers anywhere.

"The Basutos are in most excellent spirits, and fight every time we go out. We can do but little except an occasional seven days' patrol, just for the sake of a fight."

A week later he wrote again from hospital :—

"Still on my back, and likely to remain so for some time with my knee, which is getting better very slowly. I have turned into a skeleton with lying up. I think I have been most fortunate—only hit twice, and each time by a spent ball.

"I have been rather lucky in taking a troop in the Left Wing. I was offered the Depôt in the Right Wing, and also the adjutancy of the 3rd

Yeomanry; but I preferred sticking to Colonel Carrington. If I had taken either of the other appointments I should have missed nearly everything. This is the first time I've been left behind, and of course it can't be helped."

But Shervinton was laid up much longer than he expected; he was still absent when Colonel Carrington wrote to him on December 14th from Isitu Camp: "Shall be glad to see you up again. Hope your knee will hold. Give my love to Hatton, and tell him I hope we shall soon have him to the fore again. Maclean is a first-rate man. We have had hot work of it, and the Cape Mounted Rifles behave better, if possible, every day they go out. Yesterday I went out with 485 men, 200 of them Burghers. I divided my force to seize a hill, where there turned out to be 2,000; got myself surrounded by crowds and mobs, who thought they had got me safe, as I only had 200 men. I formed a hollow square . . . and fought steadily through them for 1,500 yards. I then wheeled in square to the right, and rushed a strong place with yells and drove them off, rushing right in among them. It was touch-and-go; but the men behaved like angels, and were very steady. Kimberley Horse behaved right well."

Carrington and Shervinton were of one opinion as to the value of the Cape Mounted Rifles, and indeed they were highly appreciated by all. One of the newspapers of the day wrote of them:—

"The men of the Cape Mounted Rifles are of a very superior class; more than half are old soldiers of crack regiments. The officers are gentlemen,

and in most cases have made their mark. Colonel Carrington himself is known all over the military world; D'Arcy, V.C.; Carstensen wears the Iron Cross won before Metz; Shervinton is named by the Basutos 'The Scatterer of Armies'; Maclean's name is its own guarantee; Russ, an old 10th Hussar, is the *beau ideal* of a British soldier; Montagu has already done some plucky work; and, if I do not mention others, it is that no praise of mine is needed."

Shervinton was well spoken of by all, and Brigadier-General Clarke wrote of him :—

"Captain Shervinton served under my command in Zululand, &c., &c. He distinguished himself on several occasions, and was one of the officers whose good services were brought by me to the notice of the Government at the close of the campaign."

And Colonel Shervinton was gratified to receive a letter from his old friend, Colonel Jarvis, who was in command of troops in South Africa :—

"You have been vividly brought to my remembrance by an acquaintance I made in South Africa, in the person of a fine young fellow of whom you may well be proud—as smart a soldier as one sees in many thousands! I congratulate you on the gallant service your boy is performing for the Cape Colony. He has had the best possible training for the command of a mounted corps, and he is, in addition to that, a most enterprising, active, and skilful leader. . . . Your boy is a fine chap, and the best billiard-player in South Africa. His steady habits (avoidance of strong drink and other dissipa-

tion) were much in his favour, as he always had his wits about him, and was a general favourite."

Soon after the middle of December Shervinton was able to leave the hospital, and came in by way of Wepener, alone and unarmed, without meeting a single Basuto. An officer of the Cape Mounted Yeomanry had been caught and killed on the same road a short time before.

At the end of the month Martini-Henry carbines were issued to the Cape Mounted Rifles and the Cape Mounted Yeomanry, which was a step in the right direction. Most of the yeomanry were by this time armed with swords as well, and swords for the Cape Mounted Rifles were on the way out from England. Nearly every mounted man was now provided with a revolver. The authorities had at length been forced to see the iniquity of sending men into the field insufficiently armed and without proper means of defending themselves in a hand-to-hand encounter.

A great many men of the Cape Mounted Rifles had deserted from Mafeting; it was so close to the border of the Free State that desertion was easy, but many of the men were caught and killed by the Basutos, who were said to have several white prisoners. An officer of the Cape Mounted Yeomanry was also supposed to be in their hands, as his body could not be found. The primary cause of desertion among the Cape Mounted Rifles was that they were the only regiment in the field paying for their own rations and forage, and they deeply resented the injustice.

range. They have found out the difference of the Martini already. There's no news."

On January 14th Shervinton writes :—

"We've just come in from the hardest fight we've had up to the present time. We marched from Pokwane's Camp at 3.30 a.m. with 960 men. I was with the advanced guard of Cape Mounted Rifles about 50 strong. The Native Contingent, 60 or 70 strong, were acting as scouts in our front. About 5.30 I had drawn up the squadron of Cape Mounted Rifles on a slight rise to wait for the column to come up, the Native Contingent being about 350 yards in our front, when all of a sudden we saw them galloping back with all the haste they could make, and at the same time about 3,000 or 4,000 mounted Basutos charged us.

The shape of the ground was slightly undulating. The squadron of Cape Mounted Rifles was drawn up in column of troops facing the opposite hill, behind which the Basutos had massed. About 400 Burghers were on our right, about 300 yards off. Directly I saw the Native Contingent retiring I dismounted my men and doubled them out in front of the horses, but by the time we opened fire the enemy had come to within 150 yards of us. They did not turn till they had got to within 20 yards. The Native Contingent were mixed up with the Basutos and lost some men. The Burghers, on whom the Native Contingent were trying to rally, broke, and let the Basutos into them. They lost heavily; we found twenty-six dead bodies close to where we turned them, and I shot a

man with my revolver. When they turned they simply wheeled to the right and left, those wheeling to the left passing within twenty yards of our right flank and charging straight down on the column, who turned and completely routed them. Those who wheeled to the right took up a strong position among some rocks, which were charged by Cape Mounted Rifles and infantry, and the enemy driven out. Our loss was sixteen killed and twenty wounded. The fighting lasted from 5.30 to 9.30, and was the hottest I have been in, either in Zululand or elsewhere. My horse was shot under me as they charged up.

"I cannot speak too highly of the splendid charge made by the Cape Mounted Rifles; every one says we saved the column to a great extent. If they had got through us they would have come almost on top of the column, and quite unexpectedly too.

"If the Burghers had stood the enemy would have lost tremendously. The whole thing shows what determination will do. We (Cape Mounted Rifles) thought it was all over with us. The men were all as white as sheets, but they never budged an inch, although at least 700 came almost on top of us. I never felt so proud of the men before.

"The 2nd Yeomanry made a charge with swords, but did not do much execution, as the enemy would not stand. The Cape Mounted Rifles, 3rd Yeomanry, P.A.V. Guards (infantry), and part of the Cape Town Volunteers, made a charge in line—all on foot—for about a mile, and drove the enemy clean before them."

All the newspapers mentioned the charge of the Cape Mounted Rifles in the most flattering terms. One says : " Fortunately Captains Shervinton and D'Arcy, with about forty Cape Mounted Rifles, made a most gallant and determined stand, retrieving the fortunes of the day, and turning into victory that which, but for them, would have been an utter defeat and very grave disaster. Their feat appears to have been one of the most glorious yet achieved in South Africa."

The Burghers lost a good many men in their unfortunate panic when they endeavoured to retreat. The Basutos charged in among them with assegais and battle-axes, and the retreat became almost a rout. Their commandant, Erasmus, vainly endeavoured to rally them, and was himself killed. An eye-witness describes the strange contrast presented by the scene—in one part of the field (with the Cape Mounted Rifles) perfect coolness and discipline, in another panic and death. The Burghers had behaved well in the fight of the 10th, and Carrington had expressed his satisfaction with them on that occasion, but now they were so much displeased at being reported for bolting, that they all threatened to go home, and declared that their legal term of service had expired. Discipline was not easy to enforce, as flogging was not permitted nor shooting, and very soon out of the 1,000 Burghers under Carrington only 300 remained. It was just at this time that two hundred swords arrived, and were served out to the Cape Mounted Rifles. The camp was now being continually shifted, and fighting was pretty constant.

Carrington was anxious to take the Boleka Ridge, and on February 13th he captured a strong position, which gave him command of the road as far as the ridge. Shervinton commanded the storming-party; he was very seedy, and his knee troubled him greatly, but he felt that it would be ruin to quit the field at this juncture, and determined not to do so unless wounded again.

On the 16th another reconnaissance was made in the same direction under Colonel Brabant, 1st Yeomanry, with 570 men and three guns, Shervinton being advanced guard as usual. He saw the enemy in masses just under cover, dismounted the Cape Mounted Rifles, and moved up the ridge in a hollow square with the horses in the centre. He then rode on to the top alone to ascertain the exact position of the enemy. They were on the right, mounted, and waiting to charge, so he gave them a shout and rode back. The Basutos charged on three sides; those in front were met by the Cape Mounted Rifles, broke, and did not rally.

Shervinton writes: "Directly I saw we were all right I looked to the left to see how the infantry were getting on, and to my astonishment there were the Basutos almost on top of them.

"The charge on the infantry was the charge of the day, and it was magnificently repulsed.

"The enemy charged right on to their bayonets, one man being actually bayoneted in their ranks. Horses and men were lying dead all round, so close that a man could touch them without leaving the ranks. It was the most desperate charge I have

seen yet, as the Basutos on that side were not more than 300 strong. They were about the same strength on our front, and from 1,200 to 1,500 on our right; altogether not as many by half as charged my squadron on January 14th. I believe they attempted a charge on the rear, but I did not see it; it was stopped by a gun we keep on a koppie near the camp. There were twenty-one dead bodies and nineteen dead horses in front of the infantry, and we could see them carrying away their wounded."

The weather was now very bad; it was almost impossible to move outside the entrenchments of Ramakhoatse Camp without sinking up to the knees in mud, so nothing could be done, and they had to wait till it dried up a bit. The doctors wanted Shervinton to go into hospital, as he was very seedy with camp fever, and his knee troubled him, but there was no one to take over his work, and he was unwilling to go. He took fifty grains of quinine a day, and complained of feeling stupid in consequence.

There was an armistice for a few days, but I am not certain of the date; but it was either at this time, or during an armistice earlier in the war, that Māma Letsea, a son of the paramount chief, invited Shervinton to come over and stop with him. Shervinton did so, and was treated with the greatest distinction and entertained with the best of everything, champagne included. Māma introduced him to his father Letsea, the paramount chief — of doubtful loyalty—an honour conferred on no one

else. At the end of the armistice they shook hands and parted, each returning to their respective camps. Māma had been educated in Cape Town, and spoke French and English. He had been a clerk in a Government office, but on the outbreak of the Basuto war he returned to share the fortunes of his own people.

On the 21st of March Colonel Carrington was wounded in the side while making a reconnaissance in force towards the Boleka Ridge, and on the 24th about 600 Basutos charged the cattle and horses, sweeping off 195 horses and 192 oxen ; 131 horses belonged to the Cape Mounted Rifles. Three of them were Shervinton's property.

Shervinton was now promoted to major and given the command of the Left Wing during Colonel Carrington's absence.

The Boleka Ridge was to be stormed, and he was to command the storming-party with 600 men. The General put him down to command it, but the staff officers said it would not be right to send him, as his knee was still so bad, so the General put him on his staff for the day instead. This did not please Shervinton at all ; he got a doctor to pass him as all right, but was disappointed after all, for the weather turned out so bad that nothing could be done ; no wagons could be moved, they would have been up to their axles in the mud. But the war was now happily at an end. Lerothodi was anxious to make his submission, Letsea began to protest his loyalty, and all the chiefs, excepting Masupha, agreed to the terms ; but these were decidedly favourable to

the Basutos, who gained all that they had asked for before the war, while the Government ignored all the demands which they had made themselves. All Basutos who were considered trustworthy could retain their arms by paying £1 yearly, and others, on surrendering theirs, would receive the full value.

Masupha was not likely to cause much anxiety, as he had only about 4,000 men ; but he held the great Basuto stronghold Thaba Bosizo, which had never been taken. The Dutch tried, and were repulsed with heavy loss.

Shervinton, like every one else, was heartily sick of the Basuto war, and glad it was over. He was in great hopes of getting to the Transvaal to take part in the Boer war, but this he did not manage. He was sent down to King William's Town on sick leave.

Here he met Māma Letsea again, and made him a present of an old patrol jacket. Māma wrote a note asking Shervinton to go and see him, so one day he rode over, and Māma brought out some Basuto ponies for him to choose from. Shervinton asked Māma to choose for him, and he picked out a beautiful little two-year-old, bred by his father, Letsea.

A little later Shervinton was sent back to Basutoland, to Pokwane Ridge. There was a great deal of sickness among the horses, and he lost two.

The headquarters of the Cape Mounted Rifles were to be at Umtata, and he was thankful to say goodbye to Basutoland. It took them about five

weeks to march, *vid* Palmeitfontein, James Town, Queen's Town, and Ibeka, to Umtata.

There was some discontent because all the captains promoted to majors were made by the General to revert back to their original rank, as he said it was only local rank and during war-time, which had not apparently been understood. Shervinton was excepted, for the time anyway, as it was necessary to have a field officer in command of the regiment, and the General told him that he had very good grounds for applying to be confirmed altogether. However, Shervinton declined to do anything of the sort, as he considered that he had fairly earned it, having commanded his regiment in every action during the war from January, and should have had the rank confirmed without having to ask for it.

Colonel Carrington was at home in England recovering from his wound ; a piece of shirt had been removed from it, and it was now beginning to heal.

While at Umtata two native troopers deserted, with their horses, and it was felt certain that they had gone to Pondoland, which was just then in a very unsettled condition, and unsafe for a white man. It was considered folly to try and recover them, but Shervinton, vexed at the loss of the horses, determined to make the attempt. He could speak a few words of the language, the Pondos had a nickname of their own for him, and he rather trusted to the fact of his appearance being well known to them. He ordered a sergeant, on whom he thought he could rely, to accompany him.

After riding some distance he discovered that he had forgotten to provide himself with money, and told the sergeant to return to camp, procure some, and rejoin him at a place which he named. Here he waited, but as the sergeant did not reappear Shervinton rode on alone.

He met a Boer, and induced him to lend him a sovereign. His horse began to give out, but coming to the residence of another Boer farmer, he persuaded him to give him a fresh horse and take his in exchange. He knew he was on the track of the fugitives, as he met an occasional native who gave him information. At last he approached the kraal where he had been led to believe the men were in hiding. Advancing to the hut indicated, he hitched up his horse, and, revolver in hand, demanded the surrender of the delinquents and their horses. The Pondos immediately called out his nickname, and, delighted with his pluck and confidence, made no efforts to protect the deserters, who humbly crawled out and gave themselves up.

Shervinton made them ride in front of him all the way back to camp, where he arrived in a very limp condition, having been in the saddle for two days and nights, almost without food. The men were tried by court-martial, and there were no more deserters.

In 1882 Colonel (Chinese) Gordon was appointed to the command of the British forces in South Africa. Already acquainted with Shervinton, and an old friend of his father's, he sent for the former to come and see him. The ride was a very long

one. The chief subject of discussion was the re-organisation of the Cape Mounted Rifles, and one of Gordon's proposals was to arm a squadron of this regiment with battle-axes, he having been much struck with what he had heard regarding the execution dealt by these formidable weapons when handled by the Basutos.

Shervinton listened with astonishment. He had no mind for borrowing the weapons of his savage antagonists. Ten men armed with long-range rifles might put to flight five hundred Basutos, even if similarly armed. But ten men armed only with battle-axes could be certain of nothing but destruction if forced to engage in a hand-to-hand struggle with five hundred Basutos. Also, the only available axe was the American woodman's two-handed one, and it might prove an awkward weapon for a mounted man to wield. After a good deal of discussion, Gordon finally abandoned the idea.

In 1882 Shervinton was married.

There was now a long interval of comparative peace, and in 1884, as all appeared to be quiet, the Colonial forces were reduced, and the two wings of the Cape Mounted Rifles amalgamated, with a reduction of 20 officers and 500 men. Shervinton now began to look round for something more exciting, and was offered a very good appointment in Madagascar, where General Digby Willoughby, who had done good service at the Cape, was now in supreme command.

He determined to accept the offer, and run the French blockade, leaving his wife and infant

daughter to follow when it was safe to do so. He left about the end of October, 1884.

In the meantime Colonel Carrington wrote to Colonel Shervinton to direct his son to meet Sir Charles Warren and himself on their arrival at Cape Town, as they wished him to accompany them to Bechuanaland. Sir Charles Warren telegraphed on his arrival, but no reply was received. Shervinton had left the country a week before his father's telegram could have reached him.

X

IN MADAGASCAR

IN 1885 Madagascar was by no means so well known to the outside world as it became a few years later. The French had always hankered after the big island, and with but little reason seemed to consider that they had a special interest in it, and right to act as they pleased therein. England had started trading stations with the natives a quarter of a century before Cardinal Richelieu, in 1642, formed the "Société de L'Orient" to exploit the island, and sent fourteen Frenchmen to found a colony. But this settlement, with others which followed, met with no success, and in 1672 the French were all slain by the Hovas.

A hundred years later a Hungarian noble named Benyowski was proclaimed King of Madagascar by the Hovas, but he perished in a battle with the French in May, 1786.

In 1811, when we were at war with France, General Abercrombie seized Mauritius, Réunion, and Madagascar, and soon afterwards Farquhar, Governor of Mauritius, issued a proclamation taking formal possession of Madagascar. By the Treaty of 1814

Mauritius, Réunion, and their dependencies were ceded to Great Britain, the British Government taking possession of Madagascar as an acknowledged dependency of Mauritius on the 25th of May, 1816. England, acting within her rights, in 1817 made a treaty with Radama I. acknowledging him as sovereign over the whole island (a recognition repeated to Rasoherina in 1862, not only by England, but by France and the United States).

Réunion alone was afterwards re-ceded, but nothing occurred to strengthen the claims of France to Madagascar.

Queen Ranavalona I. in 1845 issued an edict subjecting all foreigners to enslavement for debt, the *corvée* or forced labour, and all other duties to which the subject tribes of Madagascar were liable. The ships of England and France bombarded Tamatave, but nothing was gained, and in 1857 all the French were expelled from the island.

In 1869 the English missionaries converted Ranavalona II. to the Protestant faith. She was the first Christian ruler of Madagascar, although the London Missionary Society had had their members there since 1818.

Up till 1881 (when we occupied Egypt) there had been no talk of a French protectorate over Madagascar. But now the French tried to extend their influence in the north of the island, where they had been established since 1840. The Malagasy disputed their claims, and sent a Hova Embassy to Paris.

France stuck to her point, demanding the cession

of Northern Madagascar to the 16th Parallel, and finally seized upon Tamatave on the east coast, and Mojanga on the west, the two largest and most important ports. However, they went no farther, and the Hovas, secure in their mountains, despised all the efforts made for their subjection. Negotiations continued without advancing matters, and in 1883 France concluded a treaty with the United States, in which it was set forth that "the dominions of Her Majesty the Queen of Madagascar shall be understood to mean the whole extent of Madagascar."

Nevertheless, in 1884, Admiral Miot, the French naval commander, instituted a blockade of the ports. This was by no means effective, and Shervinton, like others, was able to run the blockade without much difficulty.

The Hovas, who had been the dominant race since 1810, were a gentle and amiable people, not easily roused, except in defence of their country, which they dearly loved.

The chief rulers were the Queen and the Prime Minister. The Queen always belonged to the "Andriana," or noble class, and the Prime Minister to the Hovas, or commoners. It had become customary for the Queen to marry the Prime Minister when she ascended the throne, and Rainilaiarivony, the last Prime Minister of Madagascar, was the husband of three queens in succession—Rasoherina, Ranavalona II., and the late Queen Ranavalona III., who came to the throne in 1883, in her twentieth year. She was slight and graceful, with a pensive expression, though very determined

and rather self-willed. Having been educated at an English Mission school, she spoke a little English and French ; she seldom left her palace, where she lived very quietly.

Rainilaiarivony was the real ruler of the country. Born in 1827, a most astute politician, he concealed immense energy and a determined will under an air of humility and good-nature. He held the reins of government with a firm hand, although in later days, with broken health and an enfeebled constitution, he was unable to stand against the intrigues of the court. But in 1885 he was still hale and hearty, and little thought that ten years would see him leaving his beloved island, to die an exile in a distant land.

During the war with France all French residents were compelled to leave the country by order of the Hova Government. The French in Antananarivo, numbering some hundreds, were safely conducted to the coast by the Hovas.

This war, commenced in 1883, was still dragging along with varying success upon the coast, when Shervinton landed at Tamatave in 1884. He was at once given his commission as Colonel and Military Secretary, and was second in command to General Digby Willoughby, who was Commander-in-Chief, at any rate in the field, for the title of Commander-in-Chief actually pertained to the Prime Minister. General Willoughby had done some good service at the Cape. He belonged to a family well known in India. He and Shervinton had met before, and they set up a bachelor establishment together, though

either of them was liable to be sent off at very short notice to any part of the country.

Shervinton was very much taken with the country and the people from the first. He says : "The Government are very good to us, always sending down presents of meat or fruit, and sometimes a few dollars just as a polite remembrance. They are a very queer, but extremely nice people, and certainly the cleverest and quickest at learning I ever met with."

At this time mails could only be sent off once a month, and were very uncertain, as they had to go to Mauritius by sailing-ship. Also they had to be very careful what they wrote, as letters were always liable to be opened by the French, some of the ship captains being Creoles in French pay, although British subjects and sailing under the English flag. Friends writing from home were warned to enclose their letters in three envelopes, the outside one addressed to H.B.M. Consul at Tamatave, the next to H.B.M. Vice-Consul at Antananarivo, and the inside one to the person it was actually intended for.

General Willoughby was now holding a camp of instruction a few miles north of Antananarivo. The Malagasy army was not recruited at stated periods, but when the Government thought it necessary. The Prime Minister fixed the number to be provided by each chief, in all from 20,000 to 25,000 men. The period of service was for five years, and every Hova over eighteen was liable to be called out. The Malagasy soldiers had no barracks ; they slept where they pleased, and provided their own uniforms, in

which considerable latitude was allowed. When tired of drilling or other military duties, they found it easy to bribe their officers to let them off. In spite of the lax discipline they managed to acquire a very fair notion of tactics, and considerable precision in manœuvring.

General Willoughby's camp of instruction was for the training of the new levies, and a correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* sent home an interesting account of it, from which I will make a few extracts :—

“I saw thousands upon thousands of men, some in uniform, others with their white trousers and the native lamba—most of them armed with breech-loading modern rifles, and a few with flintlocks, one company with ‘dummy’ rifles, and one with spear and shield.

“We saw several of the companies put through their various drills, and were much struck with the smartness, physique, &c., of some of the regiments.

“Colonel Shervinton said that, could he have a certain one of those regiments for a year, he would not be afraid of any crack regiment in the world.

“We then went to the General's quarters, and witnessed the first lesson in heliography, given to twelve of the staff. Colonel Shervinton has made two instruments here. The lesson was continued in the afternoon by flags, as the heliograph at one hundred yards was too brilliant for our eyes.

“The men were dismissed at 12, by gun-fire, assembled again at 2, and continued drill until 5.

“After that the General and Colonel Shervinton

went pigeon-shooting, and brought down nineteen out of twenty birds. General Willoughby has supreme command ; Colonel St. Leger Shervinton is his military secretary, and can act for him in his absence."

In May Shervinton was sent up north to fortify all the strategic points on that line. After that he was reinforced by troops from the neighbourhood, and sent to destroy some of the large native towns, whose inhabitants had been forced into rebellion by the French, who threatened them with destruction unless they joined with the French troops. The expedition was under the official command of Andriantsilavo, but really conducted by Shervinton. Before his departure the Hova General addressed the Queen as follows, when received in a farewell audience :—

"When it is the good will of thee, the Ruler, to appoint and choose from the thousands the fondling of thy own hearth to be the first to take the field, in order to restore peace to thy land and kingdom in the north, be confident indeed, O Lady, for if Frenchmen are there we will annihilate them, if Sakalavas who deny their Queen, we will crush them to pieces. Especially, too, when other nations are looking on at thee in thy work of defending thy land and kingdom, we will see that thou shalt not have cause to be ashamed."

While Shervinton went up north, General Willoughby was sent down to the east coast.

Rasanjy, the confidential secretary to the Prime Minister, was a great friend of Shervinton's all

through his ten years of residence in the island, and used to write frequently to him. Here is one of his letters written while Shervinton was on the expedition to the north.

“ANTANANARIVO, *June 20, 1885.*

“DEAR COLONEL,—It is a very long time since I heard from you, but I hope you are doing well here. General Willoughby is still on the coast. We have not much news here, only we heard from the Vice-Consul the day before last that peace between England and Russia was secured, and that most of the French soldiers from China have returned. These news dated the 2nd of May (London). We have not received the regular mail, and the foreign residents here are madly vexed at the manner so carelessly they have had from the Postmaster-General at Mauritius.

“Accompanying this is a letter for you from the Prime Minister, in which you are informed that Andriantsilavo (14 Vohitras), who is in command of the 1,000 despatched to Ampasindava Bay, and Rainisoamanahirana (15 Vohitras), the Commander-in-Chief of the army already stationed at the above-mentioned post, have both received instructions same as H.E. the Prime Minister has directed General Willoughby to give you, relative to the steps to be taken on the treatment of the disloyal Sakalava and Mozambiques, &c.

“I did not give you a translation attached to the original, as it is not private, and your interpreter will not know what it means. Still, I gave

you the above translation from Fenoariva. We heard from Mr. Smith through our Governor that the French have landed 600 men at Tamatave ; to fill the gap or not is not known.

“With kind regards, sincerely yours,

“RASANJY.”

“July 17, 1885. *Private.*

“DEAR COLONEL,—I am sorry the General is still away, and thus the reasons why you have not received any reply to your several and important despatches yet, but surely he will be here in a few days.

“Accompanying this you will receive a letter from the Prime Minister, ordering you to suspend the intended attack on the rebellious Sakalava until further order from him, because negotiation is going on at Tamatave between the two parties.

“Yours sincerely,

“RASANJY.”

The Malagasy counted rank and status by Vohitras, or Honours—Shervinton was a 12 Vohitra officer, the Prime Minister's son 16 Vohitras.

When the French took Madagascar ten years later, Rasanjy was made Governor-General of Imerina, the highest post assigned to any Malagasy official. Shervinton was always accompanied by an officer of high rank, whose business it was to see that his orders were carried out. He also had a French and a Malagasy interpreter ; of the latter he wrote, “I am very fond of my interpreter, he is

such a nice little fellow, and so plucky. He always stuck alongside of me during fighting, although it was rather hot at times, and I am not very particular about my hide when there is fighting going on."

THE FIRST WAR WITH THE FRENCH

SHERVINTON'S own account of some of the fighting in the north-west was as follows :—

“My force was reduced by sickness, death, &c., to about 1,400 men. However, I determined to destroy some of the towns, but hearing that we were expected I abandoned the road and cut a new one through a dense and mountainous forest for forty miles, and thus got on the flank of the principal town in the north, and stormed it at 2 a.m. It was a complete surprise, and succeeded beyond all my hopes. We destroyed it, and moved on to a strong position about five miles north of the French fort at Ampasandava Bay.

“Next morning I had struck camp, and my advanced guard and main body had moved off, and I was behind with the rearguard taking some bearings, when the French, 250 strong, with three mitrailleuses and 50 natives, attacked us in front, and 1,200 rebels led by Frenchmen on my right flank. I had only 200 men, who were afterwards made up to 400, and two field guns (Hotchkiss).

"We drove back the flank attack without trouble, and I then made a counter attack on the French, taking them in flank, when they bolted. We pursued them into their works and up to their ships. They left forty dead on the field, and I believe lost another hundred in the bush ; but I only learnt that from reports of men who followed them down to the beach. Anyway, they left their dead and bolted in a most disgraceful manner. This was on August 27th.

"I then withdrew, as I was short of ammunition, and not strong enough to attack any more of the towns, as the French had strengthened them, and the nearest was held by a garrison of 4,000 natives, and all under fire from the shore. I had one gun, but had no chance of using it effectively ; it was only wasting ammunition firing against the French, who were under cover of the bush.

"On September 10th the French, 3,000 strong, with cavalry and 16 guns, attacked our entrenched camp at Manjakadrionombana, near Tamatave, commanded by General Willoughby, and were repulsed with very heavy loss. The General afterwards got into and burnt a portion of the town. Altogether between us we have quieted the French for this year—and we shall be quite ready for them when they try again next year."

Servinton returned to the capital towards the end of September, having travelled 473 miles, over a frightful country, in twenty days. Altogether his bearers had carried him and his baggage over 2,000 miles in exactly four months.

From one of the newspaper accounts :—

“The return of the expedition against the French and their Sakalava allies has been the cause of great rejoicing at the capital on account of its success. When despatched the expedition was given six months to accomplish its work, but was only absent four months, during which it marched 475 miles, and obtained a complete victory over the French and their allies, with the loss of only 20 killed and wounded, and a few left behind sick. After marching for several weeks the Hovas reached a point 50 miles from Jangoa. The French commander, having heard of its approach, warned the chief of the Sakalavas, and promised assistance in case of attack.

“The country in this region is mountainous and covered with impenetrable forest, upon which the French relied as a barrier to the advance of the Hovas ; but they reckoned without their host, for Colonel Shervinton ordered a new road, forty miles long, to be cut through the forest, which was executed in three and a half days. He arrived close to them and pitched his tents almost within gunshot of them, intending to give them battle next morning.

“When morning dawned, with his tired troops he commenced to make preparations for an attack, but he was himself attacked.

“The French, numbering 250, with three machine guns and 4,000 Sakalavas, opened the engagement by sending forward the Sakalavas, who made a very poor show, being repulsed at once.

"Meantime Colonel Shervinton managed, unnoticed by the French—they not having a single scout out—to get round to their right rear, and within eight or ten yards of them, and was on them like a thunderbolt. They made no stand whatever, but fled the best way they could, leaving a flag—the glorious tricolour of France—and over forty dead on the field, together with a number of small arms. The Hovas pursued them for some way through the forest which there abounds, killing many in the chase.

"General Willoughby on the night of the 14th attacked Tamatave, and after burning a great part of the town, and destroying a quantity of French stores, retired without sustaining any loss, and having inflicted great destruction on the garrison. General Willoughby and Colonel Shervinton have now returned to the capital."

Here are some letters written on Shervinton's return by Rasanjy, the Prime Minister's confidential secretary.

"Monday, September 21, 1885.

"MY DEAR COLONEL SHERVINTON,—How are you? I hope you are in sound health, although suffering a good deal from the long journey just finished.

"As I have told you, the General left the camp on the 15th, and may be expected here any day this week (if not to-morrow).

"I need not inform you that the Queen and Prime Minister are quite pleased with the way you have

carried out your delicate mission, and accompanying this you will receive a despatch from His Excellency the Prime Minister, informing you that you will enter the capital officially ; the officers, soldiers, and band will come here about 10.30 a.m. to-morrow, and escort you to your house ; also nine guns' salute.

"No news yet, but the camp, after the victory gained on the French, made some night attacks, which, although feints, harass the enemy.

"You will have plenty of news from us when you come at the General's house. I was going to forward your despatches to the General, but they were kept back, as I heard he had left the camp. I wish you a very good-night without bad dreams of any kind.

"Yours sincerely,

"RASANJY.

"P.S.—I thought it wise not to speak to the Prime Minister about that chap."

"Monday, September, 1885. Private.

"DEAR COLONEL,—It is with great pleasure that I learn your safe arrival in the suburb of Antanana-rivo, and to say that His Excellency, so soon as I informed him, despatched officers to convey to you Her Majesty's congratulations and his own, and also to tell you that you will enter the capital officially, in consideration of what you have done.

"The General left the camp on the 15th inst., and may be here to-day or to-morrow if he did not go

by way of Vatomandey. I hope this will find you in good health.

"Yours sincerely,

"RASANJY.

"P.S.—Of course you will have to wait further instruction before you move on. I believe the officers who will escort you, and the music, &c., will come after those officers sent to see you come back."

"PALACE, *Wednesday*, 5.30 P.M.

"*October*, 1885. *Private*.

"MY DEAR COLONEL,—I have duly informed H.E. the Prime Minister of your arrival, and have conveyed to him your respectful compliments to H.M. the Queen and himself. I am directed to say that both Her Majesty and His Excellency are very glad to learn of your arrival, and that they are hoping most sincerely you are in sound health, although suffering from fatigue from the forced marches. They both wish me to thank you for your respectful compliments.

"I regret to say the large packet and letters (one of which from myself) that I sent you have missed you, as I sent them *via* Eastern route, thinking they will reach you at Ambohitrombikely. In that letter of mine I gave you some news. The large packet from Mr. Pickersgill, and I think it contains newspapers.

"The General is absent from the town. He arrived here from the camp on the night of the 25th ult., and left again on the 30th, as negotiations

are going on between us and the French down there. I hope you will not be angry with me in not giving you the outside news, as I know those Faravohitra people, on hearing of your arrival, will give you all. What I must advise you is this—don't believe what they say about peace being settled, or anything of that sort, as they don't know anything of what is going on between us.

"If I can find time I will have the pleasure of coming to see you to-morrow night, but in the meantime I have only to say that the political horizon is much clearer, and we may hear from the General any time to-night or to-morrow.

"I keep with me your official dated 'Ambohitrumbikely, 20th December, 1885,' for this reason, that on arrival at the camp, the Governor will forward it to him at Tamatave through the French officers, who, I am afraid, will keep it back or open it.

"The bearer of this—General's secretary—will convey you his orders which he has entrusted to him (secretary) before he started.

"The Queen has been pleased to send through His Excellency an officer to come over here to-night to inquire after your health (mamangy). We don't know what has happened to the 'Loo.' Goodbye. I wish you a sound sleep without bad dreams.

"Yours sincerely,

"RASANJY.

"P.S.—We haven't received your said official and letters from Malatsy.—RASANJY."

"General Digby Willoughby and Colonel St. Leger Shervinton" (says the *Times*) "have now returned to the capital, and on arrival were met by a guard of honour and escorted to the Royal Palace, where they were received by the Queen and the Prime Minister, and received Her Majesty's thanks and congratulations."

Here is an abridged account of the ceremony from the *Times* :—

"On October 1st two companies of the Queen's Guards and a band of music left Antananarivo to escort the victorious troops into the town. The people crowded the streets for four miles.

"It was nearly two o'clock when the discharges of cannon announced the approach of the triumphal procession, which covered fully a mile in length. First came the Queen's Guards in red coats and black cotton trousers, the mounted officers, and the band. The soldiers marched four deep, hardy-looking fellows. The officers were carried in palankins in the rear. The highest in rank—according to Malagasy etiquette—being the hindmost.

"The chief attraction was the trophies borne in front of the officer in command. First came four Sakalava captives; French officers' coats, helmets, and rifles, surmounted by a French flag taken in battle. The officers were loudly cheered.

"The force then formed up at the Royal Palace, where the Queen received her victorious troops and thanked them for what they had accomplished.

"On Saturday, October 3rd, a military banquet was given by Her Majesty at the Palace, at which

General Willoughby, Colonel St. Leger Shervinton, and others were present.

"Colonel Shervinton was cordially toasted and thanked by the native officers for the able manner in which he had conducted the expedition."

The French were exceedingly angry over the whole affair, and blockaded Vatomandry out of revenge, although they had promised the European inhabitants that they would not do so as long as the port was not used to land arms.

They accused Shervinton of ill-treating French prisoners and of having cut off the heads of two French soldiers. It was well known that Shervinton was particularly kind and generous in his treatment of prisoners, but it was unfortunately true that the heads of two Frenchmen had been cut off by the semi-savage Sakalava allies of the Hovas. This had been done when pursuing the flying French in their retreat through the bush. Shervinton was miles away at the time and did not even hear of it for twenty-four hours. He was exceedingly shocked, ordered the bodies to be brought and decently buried, he himself reading the burial service over them. No Frenchman of honour believed in these calumnies, but although they were entirely disproved at the time, the French papers continued to recur to them, especially at the time of the threatened war in 1891, as will be seen later on.

The French were extremely bitter against Willoughby and Shervinton, and threatened to hang them if caught, but the two Englishmen sent word by the Italian Consul that if any European officer

were taken prisoner and badly treated, they would make it a war of reprisals, and see who got the best of it. There were only about a dozen French prisoners altogether; they could easily have taken more, but preferred to let them escape, as Government did not care for the expense of keeping them.

It was said that the French were about to send out another 5,000 men and make a further attempt to take Manjakadrionombana, the camp outside Tamatave, but they were evidently discouraged and did no more.

Shervinton expressed his surprise at finding the French troops wanting in dash, and said the Hovas were getting to think less and less of them—perhaps that feeling was partly the cause of their foolish self-confidence in 1895, when they would not even make preparations to resist the invasion of a well-organised and well-equipped expedition.

After their reverses at Tamatave and in the north the French promised to erase the word "Protectorate" from the proposed Treaty of Settlement, and it was signed on December 17th.

This treaty set forth that France should control the foreign policy of Madagascar; that there should be a French Resident-General at the capital with a military escort, and the right of addressing the Queen in person; that the French should be under their own laws; that the Malagasy Government should pay an indemnity of 10,000,000 fr., and the French were to occupy Tamatave till it was paid; the Queen to have perfect freedom of internal government.

These were some of the chief clauses, and it was the different interpretation put upon them by the two countries which was the cause of so much future trouble.

Early in 1886 Shervinton was sent off to Mojunga on the north-west coast, from which he was to work his way among all the Sakalava tribes on that coast. They had two or three disputes with the French, who were still very bitter against Shervinton on account of the north expedition of the year before.

He was very anxious to make a good map of the country, and had done a great deal towards it, but was generally very much hurried when travelling; he found Stanford's map of that date very incorrect. As a rule, he reduced everything to a minimum when travelling, but on this occasion he indulged in a few more luxuries, as he expected to be away some time, for they talked of giving him charge of the west coast, with all the Customs, &c., to look after. The latter part of the business he was most unwilling to undertake, as he found the Malagasy very suspicious, and feared it would be impossible to convince them that he was not making something out of the Customs dues for himself. From Mojunga in the north-west he was sent to Fianarantsoa in the south-east. The last 220 miles of his return journey he accomplished in five and a half days.

In one of his letters he says: "Well, now we are at peace, and I want, if possible, to get into the 'Reserve of Officers' (in England), as I should then have a better chance in case of a big war at home.

"I am glad to hear Willie" (younger brother) "is

likely to recover the use of his arm. He has done uncommonly well, and I hope he will get something as good as he deserves. I have been very lucky with only two slight wounds in nearly ten years' campaigning, though I very nearly lost my leg from the wound in my knee in Basutoland.¹ I am the only European who has escaped fever, and every one wonders at it, as no one else has had so much knocking about, but I put it down to abstemiousness as a youngster, and having led such an active life. I really do think my constitution must be pretty fair; there are not many who can stand sleeping in wet blankets for fifteen successive nights without ache or pain."

¹ "Do you know I have never got my South African war-medal? They say mine was issued on roll of 5th Battalion Natal Native Contingent, but I never got it. My name was on the Cape Mounted Rifles rolls, but my medal never came."

XII

DIEGO SUAREZ AND THE EMBASSIES TO FRANCE

SOON after his return from the south-east it was decided to send Shervinton to the extreme north to delimit the boundary of the new French port of Diego Suarez, and to put up a Malagasy line of works. This involved a very rough journey of seven hundred miles. He was compelled to go by land, as he had to form a number of stations along the north-west coast, and make kabarys with the Sakalava princes.

The Bay of Diego Suarez has a surface equal to 115 square miles.

He did not much care about going, as in a letter he says : "I do not feel at all inclined for this north business. It means very hard and trying work, and probably lots of disputes with the French, but I shall have a fair force at my back and some European officers. No one else understands surveying or can speak French well. I have studied it and a good many other things in the last few years, and learning always came easy to me. As soon as I have mastered Malagasy I am going to take up

German again. I speak Malagasy pretty well for the time I have been at it, but my work has kept me so busy that I have never been able to regularly buckle down to it. I take one French and one English interpreter with me."

Shervinton left Antananarivo in April, and by August had gradually worked his way up to Ambohimarina, which was a mountain on the east coast, about four miles from the sea.

It was a position of great natural strength, and the Hova force was posted on the summit, to which access was obtained by a single causeway, and this had been cut through, so that direct access to the top was impossible without making use of a ladder some thirty feet in length.

There was a plentiful supply of water, and rice had long been extensively cultivated, while cattle were easily obtainable from the herds which roamed the plateau at the foot of the mountain. They were hoisted up the last part of the way by means of ropes.

Shervinton had to wait some time for the arrival of the French officers appointed for the delimitation and also for his co-commissioner, who was a son of the Prime Minister.

Here he was joined by his wife and infant daughter, who came from Mauritius. They soon caught the prevalent fever, and to his other duties he had to add those of sick nurse. Two of his European officers also suffered constantly from fever; one of them was not able to move out for over six weeks. Shervinton himself had two or

three touches of it, but nothing very severe after the first attack. When he felt it coming on he nipped it in the bud by a "wet pack" and forty grains of quinine, but such rough-and-ready treatment did not suit all constitutions. The Malagasy fever is an exceedingly severe one. It takes most people years and years to eradicate it from the system, while others never succeed in doing so at all.

At last the French officers arrived, and the work of delimiting the French boundary was begun. Shervinton was soon on friendly terms with them, and the commandant was very kind in sending him fruit and vegetables, books and newspapers. The last he was especially glad to get, as all his own papers had gone astray, and he had not seen a single one since he left the capital five months earlier. It was no fault of Shervinton's that this mutual good feeling did not continue.

In October he returned to Antananarivo, returning by sea, and so avoiding the long and arduous land journey.

He writes: "We came down in a French transport. The commodore, who is a great friend of mine, was going to bring us round to Tamatave in the flagship, but just before leaving, the troopship turned up from France, and we went on board her, as there was better accommodation for ladies. We spent a week in Tamatave, and took only six days to get up to the capital. The Queen was very kind and paid all our porters, which came one way and another to over £150. It is awfully expensive work

travelling out here, and wages have gone up from $2\frac{1}{2}$ to $3\frac{1}{2}$ dollars per man."

In April, 1886, M. le Myre de Vilers, that stormy petrel of Madagascar's history, had been appointed Resident-General—a post which he held until July, 1889.

M. de Vilers, who was about fifty-three years of age, had held several important appointments. He began his career in the French navy and received the Cross of the Legion of Honour for gallantry during the siege of Paris. He afterwards entered the Civil Service, and held an important post in Algeria. In 1879 he went as Plenipotentiary to the Court of Annam, and was the first civil Governor-General of Cochin China, being made Commander of the Legion of Honour. In consequence of some disagreement he was then compelled to retire into private life for two years or more. M. de Freycinet made him the first Resident-General to the Court of the Hovas, as he considered that an inflexible diplomatist was a necessity there.

M. de Vilers held himself entirely aloof from the English residents, and made no attempts to conceal his ill-will towards them. He peremptorily ordered a French naval lieutenant out of the country because he had made friends with an English family.

On Shervinton's return from the north M. de Vilers demanded of him why he had not handed over Ambohimarina to the French, saying that had he been the French commandant he would have ordered him off, and shot him if he did not leave, as he would never have put up with Shervinton's

interference. However, as the latter quietly remarked, "it was quite possible that M. de Vilers was not the only man in Madagascar who could shoot." In Paris there was great indignation that the French had not been allowed to do exactly what they pleased up in the north, and the sort of thing that was constantly said may be seen from the following newspaper extract:—

"PARIS DAY BY DAY

"By Special Wire.

"There was an interesting debate on the Madagascar question in the Chamber of Deputies this afternoon. One accusation which M. de Mahy brought is especially worth repeating.

"A British officer who, while commanding a detachment of Hovas, had had the heads of the French soldiers who had fallen into an ambuscade cut off, had actually been allowed a passage in a French transport. Exclamations arose from the Right when the speaker continued. Captain Dordot des Essarts was condemned to this man's company.

"'Who was it?' cried a member of the Right.

"'It was Colonel Shervinton,' replied M. de Mahy.

"Such was the extraordinary story related to-day in the *Tribune*."

This false and malicious charge, although entirely refuted at the time, was again brought forward in

1891, when an endeavour was being made to obtain for the French community an undue share of power to the disadvantage of other nationalities, in disregard of existing treaties and the written engagement of the accredited representative of France.

In the meantime two embassies were sent from Madagascar to Europe. The *Pall Mall Gazette* in August, 1886, has the following paragraph : "While the gallant young Colonel St. Leger Shervinton is engaged in marking out the delimitation of the French reserved area around the inlet of Diego Suarez, General Digby Willoughby, Commander of the Malagasy forces, has gone to Paris as Ambassador from Queen Ranavalona III., charged to deliver valuable presents to the President of the French Republic."

It was General Willoughby who, as Plenipotentiary of the Malagasy Government, had signed the Treaty of Settlement in 1885 on behalf of Madagascar, which Admiral Miot and M. Patrimonio signed on behalf of France, and he now seemed the most fitting person to be entrusted with a diplomatic mission. He was officially received by M. de Freycinet. He also was the bearer of presents for the Queen and the Prince of Wales, but being a British subject it was not possible for the Foreign Office to support him as Ambassador from a foreign nation ; however, he was privately received at Marlborough House.

Being greatly occupied with business, &c., General Willoughby unfortunately neglected to write to the Malagasy Government and keep them informed of

what he was doing. As month after month passed and no news was received, they became impatient and uneasy, and being a most suspicious people came to the conclusion that all was not right.

The French Resident, always eager to foment dissension between the Malagasy Government and the English officers, told the Prime Minister that he had received information of General Willoughby having been arrested for debt in London. This of course was a pure fabrication. The General had ample means at his disposal. Besides his pay as Ambassador he was allowed all his personal expenses, £1,000 a year for entertaining, £600 for uniform, £250 for carriage hire, &c., and as his staff consisted only of a clerk and a secretary the official expenses of the Embassy were not very great; at any rate, the report of his arrest was created out of pure malice. However, the Prime Minister ordered him to return forthwith to Madagascar. The General did not see the necessity of complying at once with this order, as his business was not concluded.

Shervinton frequently wrote urging him to correspond with the Malagasy Government, and to return as soon as possible, as his long absence and silence was weakening his position. At the end of the year he had not written a line to any one. In November, 1886, Shervinton says: "The General has not written to a single soul since his arrival in England. It is foolish not to write to the Government and prejudicial to himself. I have written to him on the subject."

And in May, 1887, he writes: "I wish the General were back. I think it will take all his time to put himself straight with Government from what I hear. We are all trying to square things for him, but it is difficult, as he remains away and will not write."

Finally the General did return in June, 1887, but had the misfortune to be wrecked on the way, losing his baggage, together with all documents and accounts relating to the Embassy, and, worst of all, the great seal of Madagascar with which he had been entrusted. All this placed him in a most unfortunate position, and on his return to the capital he found himself viewed with open suspicion.

A Court of Inquiry was assembled to examine into his proceedings, but after four months of repeated sittings it reported its inability to obtain any satisfactory information.

A military Court of Inquiry was then called, and came to the conclusion that General Willoughby had exceeded his instructions, disobeyed his orders, &c. He was then put under arrest and the result of the inquiries laid before a still higher tribunal. He was condemned to forfeit all his rights and privileges, to have his property confiscated, and to leave the country by a given time.

Shervinton and others loyally exerted themselves to get his sentence lightened, but without success. The resentment of the Malagasy once roused is not easily pacified, and General Willoughby took his final leave of Madagascar in May, 1888. It was most unfortunate for him that having lost most of

his papers he had little chance of defending himself.

His prolonged absence as Ambassador to Paris had an unlucky effect upon Shervinton's future, as the Malagasy persistently refused to grant him leave of absence to Europe, for they were greatly afraid that if he once left he would return to them no more.

In 1886, shortly before General Willoughby was sent home on his diplomatic mission, a Malagasy Embassy was despatched to Europe, the head of it being Rainiharavony, son of the Prime Minister. This Embassy went first to Paris with instructions to proceed to London, as it was also accredited to the English court.

But the French proceedings were remarkably strange. The Malagasy Embassy, after being received in Paris, was there detained and its members treated almost as prisoners. They were not allowed to proceed to England to fulfil their mission there, but were conducted to Marseilles, and in the most high-handed manner shipped from there straight back to Madagascar, which they reached in April, 1887.

Of the reception of the Embassy at the Malagasy court Shervinton writes :—

"We had a great day at the Palace on Thursday last, when the Queen received the Malagasy Embassy which has just returned from Paris. Besides the Malagasy themselves, only the officers in the Malagasy service were present.

"The Queen came into the grand reception-hall

in her palankin, carried by officers of the court. When she had taken her seat the usual salutations were given, and then the Embassy were admitted. They were all great swells, in brand-new diplomatic uniforms. After asking after Her Majesty's health, and presenting 'Hasina (a token of fealty) in the shape of a gold louis, they came forward separately, knelt down and kissed the Queen's feet, after which she shook hands and welcomed them.

"They then kissed the Prime Minister's feet, after which the two chief members of the Embassy gave a long account of their mission, and the affair was over.

"The head of the mission was Rainiharavony, the Prime Minister's favourite son and Secretary for War. The Queen and Prime Minister have furnished his new house from top to bottom since he has been away. I went to call on him on Saturday to welcome him back. His house was crowded with people, every one of whom brings him a present of money according to the custom of the country. I gave him two dollars just to follow the custom; but I expect, without counting what the Queen and Prime Minister gave him, he will have received about 10,000 dollars.

"Then the same thing was done before he left for France, and he would receive more going than returning.

"The Queen will give him a State Banquet next Thursday, to which we English officers will be invited. They may perhaps ask the French Resident, but I doubt it.

"A State Banquet is a terrible affair here. You get a mixture of liquors sufficient to knock your head off, and there are generally about twenty-four courses.

"One given some time ago was a caution; we sat down at five o'clock, and at 10.30 there were still several courses to be got through. We were at a picnic in the Queen's Park the other day, given by the Queen's aunt (her adopted mother), but I took good care not to arrive until well on in the afternoon."

The Prime Minister now thought of sending Shervinton to Fianarantsoa, about 200 miles south, to be in military charge of all the country south, on both east and west coasts, and about 80 miles to the north, with about 20,000 troops. However, in the end it was decided that it would be best to keep him at the capital, as there was no one who could well replace him there.

On the subject of Embassies I may mention that there had been several of late years. One was sent in 1882, and it was stated that on their return to the capital the following year the envoys had been strangled, not having been successful in their mission to Europe. But there was probably no foundation for this report. Another Embassy had been sent in 1884, the head of which was Ravoninahitriniarivo, Minister for Foreign Affairs, and a nephew of the Prime Minister, and his coadjutor was Raminaraka.

Speaking of the head of the mission, Karl Blind writes: "The Foreign Minister of the Hova Government had as little of the savage about him

as any civilised Frenchman. In point of physiognomy, in his build as well as in his ways and manners, he was remarkably like a certain type of Frenchmen, Southern Italians or Spaniards. The type of Raminaraka differed to a degree from that of the Ambassador.

"This Embassy went in the first instance to Paris, but after a while was ignominiously driven forth, because it would not sell its country's rights. It then went to London, Germany, and the United States, where it met with a very friendly reception."

While the Embassy was in London a Declaration was made between the Governments of Great Britain and Madagascar, amending Article 5 of the Treaty of 1865. The Declaration was signed by Lord Granville for England, and by Ravoninahitriniarivo, Chief Ambassador, and Raminaraka, member of the Privy Council, for Madagascar.

Article 5 commences: "British subjects shall be permitted, as fully as subjects of H.M. the Queen of Madagascar, or as subjects or citizens of the most favoured nation, to rent or lease land, houses, warehouses, and all other kinds of property, within all parts of the dominions of H.M. the Queen of Madagascar."



SHERVINTON WITH HIS MALAGASY CADETS.

mentions having received at one place three oxen, twenty-four fowls, and 140 baskets of rice.

The Malagasy are excellent carpenters, and made beautiful furniture out of various ornamental woods, and both labour and material being very cheap a handsome sideboard, cabinet, or writing-table could be had for about £3.

One of the curses of Madagascar was the system of "Fanampoana," or forced labour, which took the place of taxation. The Prime Minister was anxious to do away with it, and substitute taxation with paid labour, but the innovation was so strongly opposed by the upper classes that it had to be given up at that time. Still the Prime Minister clung to the idea, and hoped to carry it through when the French loan was paid off. The Mozambiques at Mojunga, a rebellious, lazy people, although free, were liable to be called out for Fanampoana. They refused to do their share when called upon, and asked for the protection of the British Vice-Consul, although they were Malagasy subjects and had fought on the side of the French in the war. An order was sent from the capital to execute the ringleaders. Strong measures were generally resorted to, as the only means of preserving order among these wild people.

Servinton had a Mozambique boy for some years. He brought him from the coast in 1886; the little fellow, who was only then eight or nine years old, was slave to an Arab merchant who ill-treated him, so Servinton bought and freed him, and sent him to school when he returned to Antananarivo. Servinton was now chiefly occupied in translating

English drill-books into Malagasy, as well as books on musketry, manual, and firing exercises, on artillery drill and repository exercises, on military topography, &c., so that he had plenty to occupy him.

This year he lost his little fox terrier, Nellie, whom he had had for eight years, and who accompanied him on all his campaigns, so he felt her loss acutely. He asked to have some dogs sent out from home, and three fox terriers were despatched, but the best of them was lost overboard during the voyage. The Governor of Tamatave sent up one of his own aides-de-camp with the two others, but one of them arrived with a broken thigh from an accident at sea. However, they lived and flourished, and one of their descendants eventually came to England.

In September the Foreign Secretary, who was the Prime Minister's nephew, was accused of high treason. He had been out of favour for a long time in the Palace, but was very popular with the masses. Rainiharavony, the Prime Minister's favourite son, who had been chief of the Malagasy Embassy, was jealous of his influence with the people and wanted him out of the way. As the Secretary was entering the Palace he was seized, tried, and condemned the same day for high treason, and banished. He was sentenced to twenty years in chains, and to lose his property and honours. The whole was commuted by the Queen to loss of honours and banishment. It was feared to carry out the original sentence, as there would probably have been a rising of the people in his favour.

The English residents were already considering what they should do to commemorate the Jubilee of the Queen of England. It was decided to make a Jubilee Road, for which they subscribed £200. Roads were badly needed in the neighbourhood of the capital, but the Malagasy were unwilling to make any, knowing that their absence made any invasion of the country more difficult.

A great deal of talk was made out of a trivial affair which occurred at this time, and many versions were current. I will endeavour to give the true one from Shervinton's own letters, and from Colonel Maude's account in "Five Years in Madagascar" :—

"ANTANANARIVO, *April 14*, 1888.

"I am off to Tamatave on the 19th for a week. I may just be able to send you a line from there, but send this before leaving for fear I may be prevented.

"As soon as the *Normandy* comes out I am off to the west coast to wire into the Sakalavas, but I'm afraid there will be no fighting—they will shut up.

"TAMATAVE, *April 29*, 1888.

"P.S.—I am off again to-morrow. I came down to fight a duel with a Frenchman I thrashed in the capital. Both his shots missed fire. I did not fire at him."

"ANTANANARIVO, *July 17*, 1888.

"You are abusing me about the duel business. How would you have liked me to be branded as a coward? I am sure L. would rather I fought a dozen than that such a thing should happen. It has not done

me any harm with the Malagasy, but good, on the contrary. The French also leave me alone now. I do not think they will interfere with me again. I was in rather an awkward position over it, as if I had shot the fellow I'd have been arrested by the British Consul at Tamatave, so I did not fire at him. I called out one of his seconds afterwards for having acted for him after refusing to act for me, but he apologised. We had a rather rough trip in rowing-boats to the island where the affair came off, and I suppose this must have affected his nerves, as he would not make any explanation to my seconds, but came straight to me. Anyway, I think the French fancy they have a tartar to deal with, and will leave me alone in future."

The cause of the duel was an offensive article by M. Félix Ducray in the paper *Progrès de l'Île de Madagascar*, speaking slightly of the three English officers in the service of the Queen of Madagascar.

Duelling being forbidden by the laws of the country, the meeting could not take place in Antananarivo, and the island of Ste. Marie, on the north-east coast, was fixed upon. This entailed a long and expensive journey to Tamatave, which was accomplished in six days.

Here they found that l'Ile des Prunes, a small uninhabited island about seven miles from the coast, had been placed at their disposal.

Shervinton, with his two seconds, Colonel Maude, V.C., and Mr. Connorton (afterwards British Vice-Consul on the east coast), started in a small boat at 6 a.m. on the morning after their arrival.

The water was very rough ; great rollers from the Indian Ocean impeded their progress, and though they had three Malagasy as crew it took them nearly five hours under a burning sun to reach the little island.

M. Ducray, with his two seconds and a French naval surgeon, were in a larger boat with four rowers, and as they drew ahead it was observed that the roughness of the sea had an unpleasant effect on them. - Fortunately, the three Englishmen were capital sailors.

The weapons used were the ordinary service revolvers of the French navy. I will give an abridged account of what followed in Colonel Maude's own words :—

“ M. Delhorbe marked out the ground and loaded the pistols. I won the toss and took the pistol which was nearest to me. . . . Ducray was dressed in black from head to foot. Shervinton wore a suit of light tweed. . . .

“ Delhorbe gave the signal, by arrangement, both to fire at the third word ; and called out rapidly, ‘ Un, deux, trois ! ’

“ I was watching Ducray very closely, and as Shervinton's bullet whistled by his head he remained for about two seconds with his pistol still levelled at the body of his antagonist. He then lowered his arm with an execration, and I thought he was hit. But the pistol had only missed fire.

“ I took ours from Shervinton, and gave it to Delhorbe, who reloaded them both. . . .

“ Precisely the same thing happened in the second

round as in the first, except that Ducray flung his pistol on the ground in a rage. . . .

"I have always considered the explanation to have been that M. Delhorbe, in loading the pistols, being slightly nervous, had failed to press the cartridges sufficiently home with his thumb. . . .

"A correspondent stated, that Shervinton had fired in the air, and that Ducray had intended to shoot his antagonist. With regard to the second point I am entirely of his opinion. . . . But I never heard it suggested that Shervinton had fired in the air, his own explanation of the matter to me afterwards was, that he fired near him, but without taking aim, so as to put him off his shot. . . .

"Throughout the whole of this trying day Shervinton had behaved with the greatest coolness and self-possession, conversing as carelessly upon various unimportant subjects as if no thought of a tragical ending to the affair had even entered his mind. . . .

"We started on our way back to Tamatave, it being then not far from noon.

"By some extraordinary neglect, for which we bitterly suffered, we had brought neither food nor water with us. The pull homewards led to the utter collapse of the Malagasy rowers. . . .

"There was nothing left, therefore, but for Shervinton and Connorton to work their passage home; and these two splendid men pulled the boat, with a wretched pair of native oars, to within about four miles of Tamatave. But as we neared the French ironclad *Hugon* they also had *quite* enough of it, so I insisted on steering the little craft up to the gang-

way of that famous frigate. Of course the officers knew all about the duel, and had been closely watching us during the eight or nine hours we had been in view of their telescopes.

"But, notwithstanding the fact that the affair was understood to partake more or less of an international misunderstanding, I am bound to say that they received us with perfect courtesy, invited us into the ward-room, gave us *eau sucrée* and manilla wafers ; while each of our boatmen received a tot of grog.

"We landed at Tamatave, thoroughly exhausted, at about five o'clock in the evening.

"The following is an exact transcript of the *procès-verbal* from the original in my possession, prescribed by the French code of honour :—

" Procès-Verbal.

"A la suite d'outrages commis par M. Saint-Leger Shervinton sur la personne de M. Ducray, le mardi trois Avril, dans la matinée, les témoins de parties, MM. Lavoisot, Capitaine d'Infanterie de Marine, Commandant l'escorte de M. le Résident-Général de France, et Rauchot, Chancelier de la Résidence Générale de France, pour M. Ducray, et MM. Maude ci-devant colonel d'artillerie dans l'armée de S. M. Britannique, et Horner, représentant de la maison Procter frères à Tananarive, pour M. Saint-Leger Shervinton, se sont réunis le vendredi, six Avril, à l'effet d'arrêter les conditions de la réparation par les armes à accorder à M. Ducray.

"Il a été convenu entre les témoins que le duel

aurait lieu au pistolet de combat, à vingt cinq pas ; le tir se fera à commandement et deux balles seront échangées.

“ En présence des difficultés alléguées par M. Saint-Leger Shervinton, et reconnues par les témoins, pour l'endroit où le duel aurait lieu, soit à Tananarive soit sur la Grande Terre' il a été décidé que les parties se rencontreront à Sainte Marie de Madagascar.

“ Fait à Tananarive le six Avril mil huit cent quatre vingt huit.

“ (*Sous*) M. SAINT LEGER SHERVINTON.
FRANCIS C. MAUDE, Colonel.

(*Sous*) M. DUCRAY.
S. LAVOISOT.
A. RANCHOT.”

(The two French seconds who actually appeared on the ground were M. Delhorbe, manager of the Comptoir National d'Escompte de Paris at Antananarivo, and M. Ollivier, Chief of the Customs.)

There was now some talk of another expedition against the tribes on the coast, and Shervinton writes :—

“ ANTANANARIVO, *June* 19, 1888.

“ I expect to be off very soon to south-west coast on a smashing-up expedition against the Sakalava tribes, but I don't like it ; it is dirty work, and I can't see any soldiering in it. I think the officers of the expedition are to be appointed this morning. The troops are also to parade to-day, but what date we shall start has not yet been decided.

"The French paper is at me again ; they want to get me into a row with the Government, but they will not succeed as it is on my side. It is all rot fancying there is any private understanding between the French Resident and the Prime Minister. They are hurrying off this expedition to St. Augustine's Bay because the French are going to send a Vice-Resident there, and the Malagasy intend being first in the field. There are no Hova governors or troops there at present. Please thank Dr. Maguire for the books and for all his trouble and kindness. Do not forget the book on fencing ; I want it badly for single-stick and, foils, as, although I am a fairly decent swordsman, I have never gone in for instructing, and I have to teach my cadets."

From a later letter :—

"I am not going to the south after all, but have a lot of cadets to teach instead. I should have liked going for some things, as I am fond of exploring. The expedition left a month ago, and about 1,200 have deserted up to date—so perhaps I am well out of it. They would make me a General to-morrow, but I am not ambitious, and when I ask for anything, it will be more pay or something of that sort. I am quite beyond all the old vanities nowadays.

"I don't like seeing the French so quiet as they now are about Madagascar. I am always suspicious of them unless they are blustering and swaggering.

"I saw in some paper that the admiral on the

Cape station had been experimenting with electric light, with a view to communicating with ships or stations by throwing flashes of light into the clouds, which could be seen for a distance of fifty miles. I am very anxious to hear all about it, whether it would be practicable to connect some of our ports with the capital by this means.

"I am preparing to connect Mojunga with the capital by means of heliographs, but we can never count on being able to get the sun more than four days a week. I think we should be able to work to Mojunga with nine stations."

Shervinton was always making plans for the improvement of the country or the army, but the apathy and dilatoriness so characteristic of the Malagasy prevented most of them being put into execution.

He was now sending home for mathematical instruments, prismatic compasses, &c., as well as for books on gymnastics and other subjects likely to be of use to his cadets, with whom he was now busy every day and reported to be getting on fairly well.

Shervinton also sent home for helmets for his cadets, and as soon as M. de Vilers heard of it, he sent to France for helmets for the cadets who were taught by French officers, and these helmets only came to 16s. each. Shervinton, having to send for a second supply for his young fellows, was anxious that they should not cost more than the French helmets, so as to give the French Resident no opportunity of saying that the English officers were

making money out of their cadets. Far from this Shervinton was frequently very much out of pocket in his dealings with the Malagasy. When sending home for things for himself he was frequently requested by officials of rank to order boots, uniform, &c., for them at the same time, and very lucky he considered himself if he got paid for them.

Shervinton asked his father to order the helmets, and when they arrived in Madagascar the cadets were greatly delighted to find that they only cost 6s. 4d. each with the front plate—of course they were only white canvas.

They were anxious to send Colonel Shervinton some Malagasy work as a token of gratitude, and had a very handsome pencil-case made in silver and gold, which they sent with the following letter :—

“To COLONEL SHERVINTON.

“SIR,—We feel very pleased in getting the helmets you ordered for us, and wish to thank you for your kindness. Also, we are very glad to give you a little keepsake, the enclosed pencil-case, of native gold and workmanship, begging you to accept it.

“With our respectful regards and compliments.

“We are, your sincere friends,

“H. PENOEL (a son of H.E. the Prime Minister), and

“A. RASANDY, D.P.M. RAMAKATAFANDRY.

“RAZAFRASWOMI. RABEHAGA.

“RAJASARAVONY. *And the Others.*”

Shervinton told his father that he might consider

it a pretty tall compliment, as they were by no means a generous race.

"I am surprised to hear Carrington has gone out to South Africa once more. I wish I were back with him. I have been going on with my musketry, and up to the present distance (400 yards) have beaten the French average, although they have their Werndl repeater and I have only the Snider, and very much knocked about, and awfully bad ammunition, but our instruction in musketry is, I fancy, better than the French, and if Carrington were at home he'd tell you I was a dab at musketry. The Cape Mounted Rifles beat all English regimental averages while I was musketry instructor. Of course the Government are delighted. Could you get me the French 'Musketry Instruction' book in French? and 'How to obtain a School of Musketry Certificate.' I might get some useful hints for translation into Malagasy. Don't forget the second aiguillette for my friend Rasoa, as well as one for myself. I will see the Prime Minister about Martini-Henry rifles. I do not like the Sniders, they are dangerous. The breech-block is so often flying open on discharge, I nearly had my eye knocked out by one. Ours are not Government pattern, and I think are very inferior. The sighting too is all knocked about, and unless you actually test the rifle yourself there is no getting it put right. This Government is most dilatory, and it is impossible to hurry them. They have got no ammunition. I suppose there are

about 30,000 stand of arms lying about on the floor of the Prime Minister's Palace, but they are never touched or looked at, and I got a hundred good ones with difficulty for my cadets."

XIV

THE PROTECTORATE OF FRANCE

M. LE MYRE DE VILERS, who had been absent in France, returned to Madagascar at the end of 1888, bringing the Grand Cordon of the Legion of Honour and many costly presents for the Queen.

It was a few years later, when they had annexed the country and ousted the Queen, that a French deputy said in the Chamber that there had been no occasion to present her with an Order—it would have been quite sufficient to give her a string of beads and a calico apron. So much for French chivalry.

M. de Vilers terminated his rather stormy career as Resident-General in July, 1889. One of the burning questions in his time had been that of the exequatur—whether it should be given through the Prime Minister or through M. de Vilers. So strong was the feeling on the subject that the French Resident hauled down his flag and started for the coast. There was consternation in the capital, and when he had been gone two days a messenger was sent after him suggesting a compromise and

asking him to return—which he did. It was settled that the Consuls were to apply to M. de Vilers for their *exequatur*, but instead of giving it directly to them he was to send it on to Queen Ranavalona, who *viséd* the application, and returned it to the Resident, who in his turn passed it on to the applicant, so that the Prime Minister practically got his own way, as it had to pass through his hands before it became valid.

M. de Vilers also tried to stir up the Prime Minister to send an expedition against the Mahafale, an independent tribe who had killed some French merchants. The first expedition failed, but the second was more successful ; it started in July and was under the command of a Malagasy prince. Shervinton drew up the scheme for the Government, but remarked—

“I’m afraid they’ll make a muddle of it ; a European ought to have gone with them. I’m not at all anxious to go ; besides which it is a bad soldier who volunteers unless called upon. If they do muddle it, I shall have to go eventually, but then I shall be able to insist upon having exactly what I want, which would probably not be the case if I went now.

“I hope to have a day or two’s duck-shooting at Lake Itazy, which swarms with enormous crocodiles ; some people go in for shooting them, but that is poor sport. A number of people are killed and eaten by them every year. I once shot twenty-one in a three days’ voyage down the river leading to Mojunga.

"The Queen's grandmother died the day before yesterday, so we (the court) will have to go into mourning for a few days. The official announcement is to take place to-day, and the general one probably on Saturday. I shall have to go up to the Palace this afternoon to present *Kofely*, which means literally cord or rope ; mine takes the form of a dollar, and the meaning of the word in the case of death is to buy cord to tie up the corpse. In the case of an ordinary friend it is usual to send a little broken money, but it must be whole coin for one of the Royal Family. Dollars here are cut into pieces for change, and you have to weigh them out—the weights ranging from one-third of a penny upwards to two shillings."

The new Anglican cathedral at Antananarivo was opened on August 10, 1889. It had cost so far £5,000 and was still unfinished ; £800 was wanted for the towers, and the pulpit and interior fittings were being subscribed for. The residents did what they could and Shervinton hoped that people in England might help. He was also endeavouring to help the Malagasy lace-workers. They had been taught by an English lady to make very pretty lace, after Maltese patterns, but in such a limited community it was not very easy to dispose of it, and there was some fear that the industry would die out. Shervinton hoped that some English firm at home would take it up, but other kinds of lace were in fashion and the shops would not speculate in it.

Shervinton now thought it would be wise to send home an application for leave to serve in the

Malagasy army. In 1885 General Willoughby had received an order from the Foreign Office to quit the Malagasy army, but had disregarded it, and Shervinton preferred to have some assured position.

"ANTANANARIVO, *February 16, 1889.*

"*To the Most Noble the Marquis of Salisbury, K.G.,
Chief Secretary for Foreign Affairs.*

"MY LORD MARQUIS,—I have the honour respectfully to request that your Lordship will be pleased favourably to entertain this my application for permission to serve Her Majesty the Queen of Madagascar in a military capacity.

"I have the honour, &c.,

"C. R. ST. LEGER SHERVINTON,

"*Late Cape Mounted Riflemen.*"

"FOREIGN OFFICE, *April 4, 1889.*

"SIR,—I am directed by the Marquis of Salisbury to inform you in reply to your letter of the 29th ult. that no permission is now necessary for a British subject to enter the military service of a foreign State, if such State is not at war.

"I am, &c.,

"T. H. SANDERSON."

The new French Resident, M. Bompard, now arrived, and fêtes were the order of the day. It was thought that he intended to go in for a peaceful policy. It was he who, two years later, behaved in such an unhandsome manner with regard to the

diary and letter-book which Shervinton sent him in a sealed envelope.

"Personally," says Shervinton, "I think there is no chance of another row. It would cost £20,000,000 to subdue the country, and only be successful with a thoroughly equipped force. There is no maintenance or transport to be obtained in the country—everything must come from abroad. The French lost about a third of their force from sickness in the last campaign. It's painful to see their cemeteries at Tamatave and Mojunga, and hundreds of invalids died at sea, at Réunion and Nosi Bé.

"The Prime Minister has given me one of his sons as one of my assistants. He was educated in England for six and a half years. Penoe is his name; he is rather a young scamp, and the old fellow wants him disciplined. Tell Joelson to write to his mother; she was nearly crying yesterday about never hearing from him, and his father is very vexed about it too. It is most unkind and thoughtless of the youngster."

Rajoelson was the son of Rajoelina, a son of the Prime Minister. He was educated for some years in Edinburgh, afterwards in England, and was sent to the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich for a two years' course. "Ra" before a name is a prefix equivalent to our "Mr."

The Malagasy were now beginning to feel considerable uneasiness over the attitude of the French. Shervinton, who got all the latest news from home, was everlastingly trying to instil into the Prime Minister and his secretaries the necessity for making

preparations to resist any attempt at invasion, but, though great at talking, they were hopelessly apathetic where anything ought to be done.

"I had an interview," says Shervinton, "with the Prime Minister on the 5th (March, 1890). He spoke most handsomely to me, saying that I was his friend and the friend of the Government, and that they all had the greatest confidence in me, &c. He told me a lot of his private plans in confidence, and assured me I was the only foreigner who knew of them, and only the Queen and his two secretaries among the Malagasy ; that even the Cabinet knew nothing. You can rely on it that the Prime Minister is not in the hands of the French, much the reverse, and he is only waiting and saying nothing. I am on very confidential terms with him, and he tells me pretty well everything."

But it was often exceedingly difficult to obtain an interview with the Prime Minister. There was generally some public function or ceremony going on which lasted for days, during which time no Malagasy could be expected to give his mind to business.

In May it was the expedition against the Sakalava, returning triumphant from the south-west, and for a week or so all was feasting and merrymaking. In June it was the inspection of the new levies, and the Prime Minister was away every day inspecting them in their districts, as a preliminary to their review by the Queen.

In July came the review itself, which lasted for three days, every regiment going through its drills separately. There were about 15,000 on parade.

Shervinton's cadets formed the Queen's escort. He was exceedingly pleased with them; he had just concluded their examination, and 75 per cent. had qualified, obtaining over two-third marks. The Prime Minister was delighted with them.

In August the Queen, Prime Minister, and court removed to Tsinjoarivo, two days' journey from the capital—sixty-five miles. Shervinton went out there to see the Prime Minister, and was only away sixty-four hours altogether; twenty hours there (sixteen hours' actual travelling) and half an hour more to get back, the same bearers carrying him both ways.

Then came the news that an Anglo-French treaty had been signed, one of the clauses containing England's recognition of the "Protectorate of France over Madagascar." The Malagasy were aghast; the word had never before been mentioned except in regard to some districts in the north, and England, whom the people had ever regarded as their loyal friend, was the first to sign away the freedom of the country. This treaty also settled the exequatur question in favour of France, but the Prime Minister refused to acknowledge the Consuls thus accredited. Commerce was at a standstill, war seemed imminent, and the Hovas commenced to fortify Tamatave.

Shervinton wrote home in August, 1890 :—

"We are all much troubled at England and Germany talking of leaving France to work her own sweet will here. I don't think she will do much, however; it is a very difficult country, and I'd guarantee to make it hot for them. Please keep me

up to date as to European news regarding Madagascar, and if there is going to be trouble here, put my letters under cover to the Vice-Consul, and anything important send by Cape mail.

"A despatch will go to Lord Salisbury by next mail protesting against the French Protectorate.

"The Malagasy will most certainly resent any attempt to enforce it; it is not easy to say how it will turn out. I do not think the French will go in for an expedition just yet; it would cost them so much in men and money, besides being a slow and difficult undertaking even for troops better acquainted with the conduct of native wars. Then again, these people have modern weapons and are fairly trained and disciplined, and will fight well behind earth-works.

"I am sending home my field telescope to be repaired, and I want a light tripod stand made for it—one that can be fixed on the parapet of an earth-work. Also a sword of mine—given me by Lord Bantry. Please have it fitted to a Sam Brown belt and leather scabbard, and the blade ground and crested.

"In regard to the proposed Charter, I am not working for my own hand, but for the benefit of this country. If I can make a good thing honestly at the same time I shall be delighted, but I am putting them first. I really like them and they like me—and trust me. Therefore I am bound to do all I can for them.

"I was very nearly coming home a month ago on Government business. If it had not been the fear of

a row I should have done so ; it is quite on the cards that I may still come. I enclose you the latest news from the court written by one of the Prime Minister's confidential secretaries. You will judge by it what they will do if the French force a Protectorate on them."

"TSINJOARIVO, September 15, 1890.

(*Private and Confidential.*)

"DEAR COLONEL,—Your letters addressed either to Rasanjy or myself have safely come to hand. We heartily thank you for the information or news given therein. *Re* your proposals. We have fulfilled our duty in laying them before the Prime Minister, and he says that he will take it into his consideration, and let you know if possible before the 21st inst. his *contre-projet*.

"We are quite disgusted with the news you give respecting the Ultimatum in question. We assure you that such a thing has never been given us, and whether it, or something like it, exists, *the Prime Minister will not think of giving in at all*. Therefore, when you write to your friends, you will not forget to mention this in such a way as you think it proper. The report that the Prime Minister had given in when the Anglo-French agreement was made known to him, is only an invention made so as to get you Vazahas to take it as a principal item of news to dilate upon in your letters for England, or rather Europe. Such being known all over the world, the other Powers will naturally be induced to take Madagascar as an actual Protectorate of France. So

we hope that you and our friends J. P. and M. will do the best you can to repudiate the report alluded to in your several letters, and that, in case the French demand us to accept their alleged Protection, you will not be afraid to declare that we will never give in for Life or Death.

“With kind regards from Rasanjy and myself,

“Yours sincerely,

“RASOA-RANI-HARISOA.

“P.S.—This untidy scribble you will please take as answer to the letters addressed to Rasanjy and myself. Please don't pack up yet !—R. R. H.”

A few weeks later Shervinton writes :—

“We are anxious to know what the French are going to do about their Protectorate. They will have to fight for it. I hear the Prime Minister will not even agree to the English Consuls taking out their exequatur through the Resident. I know the Resident has made no demands as yet, and has not had an interview. My own impression is that the Resident-General will do *nothing* until France is ready to move an expedition, and that then there will be a sudden flare-up. In the meantime he will give assurances that things shall remain as they are. I shall have hard work convincing the Prime Minister to prepare and not trust to assurances. France I think is bound to move, unless she chooses to be made the laughing-stock of Europe.

“I could not learn much up at the Palace yesterday, as everybody was busy counting dollars to pay the interest on the loan (*comptoir*) which falls due

to-day. They have to pay up every six months. Please speak sharply to Joelson about gambling and getting into debt. His father says he will not allow him to finish his course at Woolwich if he hears any more of it, and I will most certainly tell the Prime Minister if I hear any more reports about his making a fool of himself."

The next festival, to which everything had to give way, was the great yearly festival of the "Fandroana," which was held in November, and coincided with the Queen's birthday, so that both were celebrated at the same time.

The whole place was flooded with beef, and the waste terrible. It was the Malagasy custom to send round to all their friends lumps of beef weighing from 3 to 20 lbs. Shervinton himself got at least 100 pieces. Besides this the Queen sent him a whole ox, and he bought another, and numbers of hangers-on brought fowls and turkeys, so that at this time of year the whole place became one vast butcher's shop.

On the Queen's birthday, November 22nd, a large number of Malagasy and the foreign residents (by invitation) assembled in the great hall of the Palace. The Queen in scarlet robes sat on her chair of State, but no one else was permitted a seat. The Queen's bath was the great feature of the proceedings. The water was heated over a wood fire in view of all, and then the Queen retired behind a curtain, where she remained for nearly an hour. When she returned she was clad in her robes of state, and carried a silver vessel containing water from the bath, with

which she sprinkled her guests. A roar of cannon announced that Her Majesty had bathed. The chiefs came forward to salute her, and the Prime Minister made a speech. About midnight Queen Ranavalona dismissed her people with her blessing—they had stood patiently since 7 p.m.—and the chief ceremony of the Fandroana was over.

XV

THE FRENCH CALUMNIES—THE EXEQUATUR.

SHERVINTON now hoped to pay a hurried visit to England, chiefly on Government business. When he had been on the point of starting some weeks before he had sent his wife and children to Natal, as it was hardly worth while taking them to England for such a short period. He left the capital towards the end of December, reaching Tamatave on the 28th. Here he hoped to catch the French mail of January 8th, but was in a state of uncertainty, as he had to wait for important papers, without which he would not leave. As usual there were endless delays, and he much regretted having left Antananarivo without them. January 26th found him still awaiting them at Tamatave, when he heard from Natal that his wife and children were ill, and immediately made up his mind to go *via* Natal, and see them on his way, his future movements depending on how they were. There was a ship starting for Mauritius in an hour; his arrangements were speedily completed, and he started in her.

He got as far as Mauritius, and while waiting there for another steamer to take him on to the Cape received an urgent summons from the Prime Minister recalling him at once to the capital. They were greatly afraid that if he once left he would never return.

This was a great blow to Shervinton, who had now been abroad for sixteen years without a break, and longed to see England and his people again. However, he put aside all thoughts of self and hurried back to his post.

"I may come home sometime towards the end of the year," he writes. "Keep me well posted as to the French attitude towards Madagascar. The Prime Minister is quite determined to fight if pressed, and if he would only listen to me I would guarantee to keep the French on the coast for two years, by which time I think France would be sick of it, and as anxious to make peace as she was last year.

"The French are disgusted at my not going home. I hear they have written to the Minister in London telling him to use all his influence to get me a good billet from the English Government, and to do everything to prevent my return here.

"I am sending my letters to L. under cover to London, as I know the French are curious about my sudden return here. I hope you will write to her frequently; I can only write once a month from here. I went to see my grandfather's grave at Mauritius; it is in good order.

"My house was broken into while I was away, and

all my papers scattered about, so I have lost a lot of rather important documents, some belonging to the Government. It is most deadly dull for me, I miss all my belongings very much."

The French, who were hoping that they had got rid of Shervinton altogether, were very much vexed at his sudden and unexpected reappearance at the capital. In their anger they were not ashamed to revive the old accusation of Shervinton having allowed the heads of French soldiers to be cut off.

It drew forth a storm of indignant protest from the English residents and newspapers ; here are a few extracts from the latter :—

The *Madagascar News*, June 21, 1891 : "We protest most emphatically against the revival of the monstrous charge the French—in a moment of righteous indignation—thought fit to mistakenly bring against our countryman, Colonel St. Leger Shervinton.

"An officer cannot always be responsible for the doings of his soldiery, when they are far in advance pressing an advantage. The Shervintons are a family of gentlefolk by long descent, as well as by nature, and they are, moreover, a race of soldiers. Is it likely, then, that a scion of a military house would so far forget the traditions of his race and military honour, as to perpetrate indignities on the dead bodies of his antagonists ? The bodies of the unfortunate men were found miles away from Colonel Shervinton's position. The heads did not

figure in the triumphal entry of the Hova. They were interred by order of Colonel Shervinton directly he heard of the occurrence, and he himself read the burial service over them."

The *Madagascar News*, July 4, 1891: "THE CALUMNIES ON COLONEL SHERVINTON. — The revival of the proposterous charge against Colonel Shervinton concerns the whole foreign community in this country. It indisputably shows the predisposition of the French public in this country, to prejudge unfavourably Englishmen whom malice or wrong conclusions may place in grave positions. . . . The charge has further been resuscitated at a moment when political complications are imminent. When the Treaty of 1885 was negotiated at the conclusion of the Franco-Malagasy War, so far from any complaint being preferred against Colonel Shervinton by the French Government, the representatives treated him with all cordiality, and he was, moreover, their guest. Had they any belief in the truth of the charges Frenchmen—of all men—will admit that the official representatives of their country would not have received Colonel Shervinton on terms of equality."

The *Madagascar News*, July 1, 1891: "In common with others, I am unwilling to believe that the cowardly attacks against Colonel Shervinton have been made with a full knowledge of the real facts of the case. One can quite understand that, in the event

of hostilities ever again breaking out, there is no one whose abilities would be more valuable to the latter, or more dreaded by the former, than those of our fellow-countryman. But surely that is not a sufficient reason for the persistent manner in which these calumnies are from time to time renewed on the part of the citizens of a nation which once carried the palm for courtesy and chivalry? On more than one occasion it fell to Colonel Shervinton's lot to visit the French prisoners taken by the Hova troops. He invariably took care that they had proper and abundant food provided for them and investigated their complaints. In one instance, that of a man named, I believe, Garnier, it was found that, although well fed, his clothing was in a deplorable condition. Colonel Shervinton instantly, out of his own pocket, supplied him with a handful of dollars, and gave him besides a new suit of clothes. Nor was this by any means the only pecuniary help he gave to French prisoners. The above facts show that, so far from his having been a cruel or ungenerous commander, Colonel Shervinton acted in a manner which is rare in its humanity and generosity; and which, if known by his assailants, should at least put them to silence; even if it does not wring from them that tribute of respect and gratitude which one brave foe used ever to be willing to concede to the other."

I will now conclude the subject by reproducing Colonel Shervinton's letter :—

"To the Editor of the *Madagascar News*,

"June 29, 1891.

"SIR,—Permit me to express my sincere thanks for your remarks upon the dastardly attack made upon me by the French, and reiterated by *L'Opinion Publique* of the 14th inst. after this long lapse of time.

"I have always made a point of refraining from taking up this charge publicly, as I thought it had long since ceased to obtain belief, even from the French ; but now the time has arrived for me to give my version of the story, which, with your permission, I will do through your columns.

"It is with regret that I have to admit that there were some heads cut off after the Andampy affair ; but this was done by Sakalava followers, and not by Hova soldiers.

"The matter did not come to my knowledge until eighteen hours afterwards, and I then took care that they were decently interred. I do not for a moment believe that any further outrage was committed, and the statement that the heads figured at the triumphant return of the army to Antananarivo is false : the only trophy, besides a few prisoners, was a French tricolor and some rifles left behind by the French after their unique *victory* at Andampy !

"The statement that atrocities were committed at Tongoa is distinctly false. I was there from first to last, and nothing of the sort took place which has been described by the *Opinion Publique*.

"On my return to Ankaramy I wrote to the commandant of Ambodimadiro—Captain Pennequin

—expressing my sorrow for what had occurred at Andampy, and promised to bring the perpetrators of the deed to justice.

“After the war I was for some time in company with the commodore, M. le Comte des Essarts ; we frequently spoke of the matter, and he assured me that no French *gentleman* believed in it.

“If they had, should I have been a guest of the commodore for a fortnight, and have parted with him on the most friendly terms ?

“More than a year ago I received a letter from a friend, in which he referred to this old charge and said I was bound to give it denial.

“After consultation with others amongst my friends, I decided—much against the grain—to write to M. Bompard, the Resident-General of France, on the subject.

“I did so on the 7th of June, 1890, and pledged him my word of honour as an officer and a gentleman that my statement was true.

“I further enclosed my diary and letter-book, *under a separate cover*, saying that he was at liberty to open and read them, *if he doubted my pledged word*.

“Some four hours afterwards I received my books back, through the British Vice-consul, under a new cover bearing the Resident-General’s seal, with a note written to Mr. Pickersgill (the Consul) saying that, receiving two packets together, he inadvertently opened them both ; and only found, after perusing my letter, that certain conditions were attached to the opening of the second packet.

"I am at least M. Bompard's equal in birth and breeding, and I submit that, in acting as he did, the Resident-General showed a gross want of courtesy to myself.

"Although I am not ungenerous enough to disbelieve his statements, he was bound to admit the truth of mine, or to give me the fullest opportunity of proving them.

"I fearlessly leave the case to the judgment of the unbiassed public, who will, I am satisfied, feel as I do, that the raking up of such unfounded charges at this moment, only shows petty spite and a weak cause.

"I am, Sir, yours, &c.,

"C. R. ST. LEGER SHERVINTON,

"Colonel Malagasy Army."

Soon after this, Shervinton was again on the point of starting for England, but unfortunately, when he was discussing the matter with the Prime Minister, a relative of the latter overheard the conversation and at once reported it to the French. Shervinton immediately made up his mind not to go.

The Prime Minister had greatly felt the sudden death of his favourite son, Rainiharavony; he could scarcely speak when he announced it to the people, and it was some time before he could return to business.

M. Campan now arrived from France; it was supposed that he had been sent out to define the French interpretation of the Protectorate, and it

was expected that the Resident would speedily demand the acquiescence of the Malagasy; but he was probably unwilling to push matters too far without troops to back him up, for things continued to go on much as before, with the usual disagreements.

Shervinton says: "We have a row on about the German Consul's exequatur. In 1887 when the Resident-General hauled down his flag over the American Consul's exequatur, he eventually agreed that the Prime Minister should issue them direct, but that they should have no political power. We are sticking to this. When the affair was thus arranged in 1887, the Prime Minister wrote to all the Treaty Powers that he would consider it a breach of the treaty if they asked for the exequaturs of their consuls through the Resident-General. I expect France has her hands too full elsewhere to force on a row here just now.

"I translate the articles from the French papers for the *Madagascar News*, and you will see I went for the Resident-General over one of them the other day. I had to send two special runners to catch the mail at Tamatave; it is not safe to send one as he may fall sick, 220 miles in less than five days is a good long pull. It costs £1 4s. a man to go in four and a half days; of course the men were Queen's runners and I am not obliged to pay them a cent, but I never make use of that sort of privilege unless absolutely necessary.

"There is great dissatisfaction here about the new judicial law for Madagascar. The Malagasy will

not consent to its taking effect on Malagasy and the English are all furious.

"You people who do not know the Malagasy have no idea of the procrastination which is habitual to them. At present it takes a long time and immense trouble to get legal cases adjusted between Malagasy and foreigners ; how much worse will it be if Lord Salisbury consents to place British subjects under French jurisdiction—we shall then have to go to the French court—which will refer the matter to the Malagasy, and (owing to the friction which will certainly exist between French and Malagasy on the subject of French interference in the internal affairs of the country), we poor English will be in a worse case than now when we have only the Malagasy to deal with. That the Malagasy will resist any attempt of the French to enforce the Protectorate, I will stake my head.

"I can't make out what the Prime Minister is up to, as I have not been able to speak to him. He has kept me in every afternoon this week saying he wanted me, but that is all. He has refused distinctly to allow the German Consul's exequatur to go through the Resident, and the Resident has told him that he will refer the matter to M. Ribot and General Caprivi.

"The American Consul arrived last week—he is as black as the ace of spades. He has instructions from his Government to demand his exequatur direct from the Malagasy. I do not think the French will force the point, but there is no knowing. France will look very small if she lets this

exequatur slide, but I do not believe we are going to have a row. I am going to tell L. to come back as I see no chance of getting away at present—if things are quieter next year I will come.

"The American Consul applied for and got his exequatur direct from the Prime Minister, and the Resident has written to the German Consul asking him to do nothing at present, as things will be satisfactorily settled in a few months, and *he* will then be able to give him his exequatur. We do not know what he means. The Malagasy mean to fight rather than to give way to France—so you see it is impossible for me to leave the country now."

The English Vice-consul now went away for a month, and the Resident wrote to the Prime Minister officially notifying him of the fact.

The Prime Minister wrote and thanked the Resident for his *letter*, but told him he did not see what he had to do with the British Consul.

The Resident tried to argue the matter out at his next interview, but the Prime Minister was firm and declined to discuss the matter.

Things now began to look very unpleasant. All the French ladies left Antananarivo in expectation of disturbances, and the Resident-General was recalled to France; it was hoped that on his arrival he would advocate a peaceful policy, but this was doubtful. Shervinton was most anxious that preparations of some kind should be made and that the country should not be left helpless in case of invasion.

He never ceased to urge on the dilatory Malagasy

the necessity of providing arms and ammunition and fortifying the coast towns. He believed if they could only show a bold front, that the French would not be so ready to incur all the risks of a campaign, especially after the experiences they had already had. However, there is nothing to show that his advice, or any part of it was taken. The Malagasy talked very largely about fighting and dying in defence of their country, but the matter went no further; the arms they sent for were few and scanty in comparison with what was needed, and no preparations worth speaking of were ever made.

The Prime Minister desired Shervinton to make and send in a Report of what he considered absolutely necessary to be done, and he drew up the following :—

“For the Information of His Excellency the Prime Minister.

“REPORT ON TAMATAVE AND MANJAKAN-
DRIONOMBANA.

“ANTANANARIVO, November 22, 1891.

“The harbour and town of Tamatave can be defended against any cruisers likely to appear in these waters, at a comparatively small expenditure. The under-mentioned guns would, in my opinion, effectively defend the place—

“4 5-ton 6-inch guns on disappearing carriages.

“6 quick-firing, 4 7-inch guns, or

“12 field guns, 12-pr.

"6 revolver Hotchkiss.

"6 Gardiner guns, 2 barrel with shields.

"500 rounds per gun, 15,000 rounds for machine gun.

"The existing fort at Tamatave is useless, one shell from a ship's 5-inch gun would destroy every man in it. It ought to be blown up, should it be decided not to hold Tamatave in case of war; 600 lbs. of dynamite or 2,000 lbs. of powder would utterly destroy it.

"The Ambohimanga should be disarmed and arrangements made for connecting Manjakandrionombana with the capital by telegraph. The wire between Tamatave and Amboditsiny could be quickly and easily removed.

"The lines of Manjakandrionombana should be always held by a small force. At the present moment I see nothing to prevent their being seized by a *coup de main*. The position is an excellent one, but requires strengthening and its front cleared of cover. It must be remembered that in the event of war smokeless powder would be used against us, there would therefore be nothing to guide our troops in returning the enemy's fire, so long as cover was left to hide them from us. The works along the river-bank are completely masked from the enemy's view; this is quite right, but unfortunately the enemy is equally invisible to us from our works until he has actually reached the foot of the parapet, and a hand-to-hand combat takes place, excepting at long ranges beyond the effective command of the Snider rifle.

"I consider the lines would be impregnable to a frontal attack were they put into an efficient state. The flanks, however, are liable to an attack from boats, and if such an attack succeeded the position would be completely turned. Two works are required to guard the flanks—one at the junction of the Voloina and Ranomainty rivers, the other where the river Viranikona runs into the Ranomena. Each work would require two revolver Hotchkiss and one Gardiner gun.

"I do not anticipate an attack *vid* Voloina and Ranomainty ; on the other hand, I am quite positive that the position *will* be attacked by boats, which will start from Ivondrona and go up the Ranomena. The boat expedition would be supported by a strong force occupying the wood in front of Sahamafy.

"At least four strong permanent redoubts to hold 400 men each should be erected on the hills in rear of the rivers, to be connected by rifle-pits and earthworks of slight profile if war should occur, with obstacles in front. A long range gun would be very effective against Tamatave from Manjakan-drionombana, and I strongly urge the advisability of at once removing the guns of the Ambohimanga, and placing the big one at Manjakandrionombana and the two revolver Hotchkiss at Ranomena.

"The two-gun battery near Mahasoa requires strengthening as well as the earthworks on the Ivondrona, but even then they would be very isolated. My own opinion is to abandon all ground south of the junction of the Ranomena and Viranikona rivers, and all north of Ambohinia-

renona, except the proposed fort at the junction of Voloina and Ranomainty, and occupy the wood in front of Sahamafy. A chain cable should be stretched across the rivers under the fire of the proposed forts.

"The village of Amboditsiny covers the direct road to the capital, and a force can only approach it by water from the north. It should be fortified.

"I do not consider a force of less than 8,000 men would be sufficient to hold the lines of Manjakan-drionombana, and then with this number it could only be done by providing good lateral communications and a field telegraph.

"It is very desirable that as much food as possible be planted at once about the hills in rear of the lines, such as rice, mangohazo, sweet potatoes, &c.

"C. R. ST. LEGER SHERVINTON,

"Colonel, Malagasy Army."

XVI

DISAGREEMENTS WITH THE FRENCH

THE officers in the Malagasy service were sometimes pretty hard up for money. There was plenty in the country, and it was usual to send up all the customs dues, &c., every three months. This was called Vohimar. When *all* had by degrees arrived from the different provinces, the whole was counted out before the Queen, who then handed it over to the treasurers. Sometimes Vohimar was very much behindhand, and when the money was coming in, when it was being counted out, and after it was handed over, no money could be obtained; so unless pay was applied for at a convenient time it could not be had, and was frequently considerably in arrear.

Vohimar was not a good time to apply to the Prime Minister for anything, or to discuss business with him. Then came the death of another of his sons, Ratsimandresy, by poison, and no one could see him for some time after that. Then it was rumoured that another son Penoe, who was one of Shervinton's officers, had been killed by brigands

in the north, in the neighbourhood of Mojunga—this report turned out to be unfounded.

The Prime Minister had telegraphed to his grandson Rajoelson, who was at Woolwich Academy, to return at once to Madagascar, and of course there was a reception for him. Great preparations were made in his own home, and his father, Rajoelina, had carpenters working night and day on the house to have everything ready to receive him. The Queen's aunt gave a big dinner and dance, to which Shervinton went with his wife; it was not etiquette for the Queen to be present, but she was looking on from behind a curtain.

The Prime Minister had given Shervinton leave to select land for a coffee estate near Moromanga, so he now went with a letter to the governor from the Prime Minister. He fixed upon a lovely property of about 5,000 acres, well-wooded and with a fine river running through it, the altitude a little over 3,000 feet. Everything was most favourable for the growth of coffee, and Shervinton looked upon it as a valuable piece of property likely to make large returns for any outlay. He brought 20,000 plants with him, and there were 60,000 more in Mr. Bonar's nursery; by the end of the year 100 acres were planted out. Great sums of money were spent in clearing and planting. Labour was the chief difficulty, as the people of Moromanga were a lazy lot, and men had to be brought from the south-east, which, of course, added considerably to the expense; but the place was soon in a flourishing condition, and Shervinton hoped great things from

it, looking upon it as a sort of provision for his children.

It was hard a few years later to be deprived of it without any compensation, and he bitterly regretted the money which had been spent upon it. Every year more and more ground was planted out at considerable expense, and about thirty more acres brought under cultivation.

Shervinton paid frequent visits to Moromanga, saw all the lines for the coffee pegged out, selected sites for the bungalows, made bridges, and built huts for the labourers, made a plan for a span bridge as the river was only 45 feet wide, as well as plans of the land as they planted it out. The river ran round two sides of the property, and they had to dam it in order to get water power for pulping, &c.

Early in 1892, Shervinton says :—

“We hear that cad Bompard is coming out again ; if he does there will be a row, as he has made up his mind to push matters if his Government will let him ; but it seems improbable to me that France will commit herself to an expedition while Europe is so unsettled. She would require 30,000 men, and even if they got up here they would have to keep a large force for years.

“I feel assured that if the Malagasy thought a Bank charter could make any change in England's attitude towards Madagascar—that it would be granted at once. I would try my best and would most probably succeed, but I do not like asking for a thing that may only result in irritating France and giving no beneficial result to this country. It could

be done almost at once if I could get a guarantee that England would see it through.

"Two of my old men—non-commissioned officers in the Cape Mounted Rifles—turned up here yesterday almost destitute, hoping I would be able to find something for them to do. I am always being hunted up by somebody; people seem to think they have only to show themselves here for something to drop into their mouths, whereas a man could not earn enough to keep himself even by manual labour. Unless the Prime Minister stirs his stumps he will not be able to pay the interest on the French loan on November 1st. It is about £22,000 every half year."

The French loan was about 20,000,000 francs at 6 per cent. The amount was to have been lent by Englishmen at 7 per cent., with the right to form a State bank, coin money, and issue bank-notes.

M. de Vilers, who was Resident at the time, refused to allow it, and said it was a matter of foreign policy. Two representatives of the *Comptoir d'Escompte* were sent for in haste, and they agreed to lend the money at 6 per cent., the capital to be entirely repaid in five years' time.

The French Resident was still on the warpath. The United States chose to deal directly with the Malagasy Government, and their Foreign Secretary wrote to the Prime Minister on the subject of their being represented at the forthcoming Chicago Exhibition. The Resident-General heard of it, and addressed a remonstrance to the Prime Minister, who told him plainly to attend to his own affairs.

But for all that the Prime Minister was most anxious not to give France any grounds of complaint.

The year 1893 opened with a hurricane. At Moromanga all the houses which Shervinton had put up were blown down, and the coffee plants in the nurseries were all under water. Luckily no serious damage was done.

The river embankment burst, and all the rice-fields were under water. A measure of rice rose from 1s. 4d. to 4s., but little harm was really done, and prices soon became normal again.

No one remembered having seen such a flood, but it was the rainy season, and the average rainfall for December, January, and February, the three wettest months, is about 40 inches, but considerably less rain falls in the neighbourhood of the capital than in the surrounding districts.

The gap in the embankment was 225 feet long, 20 feet of water, and the river pouring through. About 50,000 men were soon at work. They brought branches of trees for fascines, poles, staking, &c., so that on these occasions there was generally great destruction of trees, which are not over plentiful.

They are very good at this kind of work, and in four days the gap was filled up again. The Prime Minister was there in person every day, standing in the hot sun until seven or eight in the evening. He knew that the work would be far more efficiently done if he were there to superintend it.

Generally they managed to save the bank before it entirely gave way. In very wet weather men

were stationed all along, and when it began to break fires were lighted, and everybody, including the Prime Minister, rushed to the spot with branches to strengthen it in time, but on this occasion it gave way suddenly at night without any warning.

Shervinton had to send down to the coast about this time for some goods from England. The Government offered to bring them up by forced labour, but of course he could not accept this, as he was always trying to persuade them to do away with it altogether.

The French insisted upon opening the boxes at the Customs House, in spite of orders sent from the Malagasy court. Whether on account of their being carelessly fastened up or not, when they arrived at the capital all the clothing was sopping wet, and a quantity of toys, &c., ruined. Shervinton was indignant, and supposed that they would take to opening his letters as well as his cases.

He was rather anxious to make a little expedition about three days' west to hunt up some of the robber tribes. They attacked the border villages in bands of 200 or 300, and they had just carried off 150 people and a great number of cattle. Two hundred men with a Gardiner gun were sent off at once to try and rescue the people, but generally the robbers made straight off to the wilderness and sold their captives into slavery to the Sakalava tribes. The Prime Minister did not care to let Shervinton go in pursuit of them.

But it was getting more and more difficult to induce the Prime Minister to do anything; he

became more procrastinating every day. There was always some excuse for his shutting himself up and not attending to business—now it was influenza, of which he had a slight touch. It had carried off numbers of the people, and the Queen insisted on his keeping quiet.

In October, 1893, Shervinton wrote home :—

“I sincerely hope we shall not enter upon a war over the exequatur question. Unfortunately the Malagasy set unreasonable value upon it, and it will be most difficult to induce the Prime Minister to give way. I shall do my best and so will Mr. Parrett, but I am not very sanguine.

“If we have to fight, I think we can keep the French out of here for quite two years, but it must be a losing game for us, and an expensive one for France. It will put a stop to my coming home. Of course the Malagasy *must* give in to the exequatur of consuls, and perhaps give the French more elbow-room at Diego Suarez.

“The situation is difficult, but far from desperate if the Prime Minister will only listen to our advice. Parrett is seeing him to-day, and I am to see him to-morrow, and we have both decided to leave if he will not do what we think right.

“It is ridiculous to rush the country into a war when very small concessions will satisfy France—at any rate, for the present.

“It is quite certain we have nothing to expect from England, and therefore it is wiser to do all we can to prevent a war which, even if successful, would throw the country back at least ten years, and cost a lot of men and money.

"Then the Prime Minister's health is delicate, and if he were taken ill I do not see how I should get on for reinforcements of men and money. So I have determined first of all to do what I can to prevent a war, and, if that is not to be done, to at least see that we have some one who can take the Prime Minister's place and direct affairs should he fall ill—otherwise I'll go."

Four months later he writes :—

"I do not believe in the rumours of a French expedition, still I am urging the Government to make preparations, though I earnestly hope they may not be necessary.

"I shall certainly send L. and the children home; it would only add to my anxieties and responsibilities to have them here.

"Of course if there is a row, and I should be unlucky enough to fall into French hands, I should get a very short shrift. I only hope you will be able to make them pay for it. I do not care a rap about myself so long as I am able to leave L. and the kids well off.

"Moromanga should bring in £1,000 a year at least within the next two years, and if this gold concession is a success there is no knowing what I might be worth, and I shall also try to get the Queen to give L. a pension if anything happens. I should like the boys to be soldiers, like the rest of us. You must not think I am in any way down on my luck—I am only looking ahead.

"I am trying to get the Prime Minister to see the advisability of abandoning all outlying posts in the

event of war, and concentrating his strength on the approaches to the central province. But I am afraid he will scatter his forces over a vast area, instead of being able to meet in force the real advance of the French.

"Of course Mojunga is the most probable route the French will take, and I want him to prepare to mobilise. I also want him to make me Governor of that province, Iboina, with full powers. I know and have sketched the whole of the routes and positions between Mojunga and here, so if they only act squarely and give me men and ammunition it should be a very hard nut to crack—I almost think impossible."

Again there was a coolness between the Resident and the Prime Minister.

There had been so many disputes between the Governor and the Lieutenant-Governor of Iboina in the north-west, that both were sent for to the capital. The Lieutenant-Governor was young, rich, and a tool of the French, who wished him to be sent back to replace the Governor. They were naturally anxious to see their own man there, as if an expedition were sent it was pretty certain to take that route, and if they could only succeed in taking Mevatanana by surprise, the Malagasy would be awkwardly placed.

When the Prime Minister decided to send the Governor back, the Resident was furious, threatened him with serious consequences, and said "France would consider it as an insult." But the Prime Minister stuck to his own man.

M. Ranchaud, who was next in rank to the Resident, left for France in March; it was supposed with the intention of trying to induce the French Government to send an expedition. All the French in Madagascar were excessively annoyed that no expedition had been voted by the Chambers, and they did all they could to stir up a row.

M. Ranchaud was most unpopular with all except his own countrymen. He was supposed to act the part of spy on the Resident-General, and had constant quarrels with the Government. The French everywhere treated the natives of all classes in a very high-handed manner. To quote an instance :—

The Governor of Fort Dauphin refused the traders there permission to build a jetty without first obtaining leave from the capital. Captain Denis of the *Hugon*, who was there at the time, threatened to make the Governor a prisoner and bring him along with him. The Prime Minister remonstrated with the Resident, who said he quite approved of Captain Denis's action. Captain Denis then proceeded to Maravantsitua, and when he had been there two days sent to the Governor, who lived five miles inland, to express surprise that he had not called upon him, and to request him to come at 8 a.m. the following day.

The Governor replied that he was sorry Captain Denis should have come at such an unfortunate time, as he was ill in bed with fever, but would be much pleased to see Captain Denis if he would come up.

Captain Denis replied that if he did not come by 8 a.m. he would be forced to land a party and fetch him. The Governor never went, neither was the party landed, but the high-handed ways of the French officers irritated the Malagasy. In fact, all French subjects seemed to think that they could do just what they pleased.

Two thousand soldiers were sent down to suppress the robbers in a certain district where M. Superbie had a gold concession. This gentleman endeavoured to get these soldiers to work his alluvial gold instead of attending to their lawful business. The Prime Minister was indignant, and notified the Resident that he would cancel M. Superbie's concession.

But in spite of all the petty disagreements there seemed to be no immediate prospect of a French expedition being sent out, and Shervinton once more applied to the Prime Minister for leave to go to England. This was at first refused, the Prime Minister being most unwilling to part with him, fearing he might not return. Shervinton applied again. The Prime Minister asked why he was so anxious to go. Shervinton replied that he wished to see his mother once more, as he had not been home for nearly eighteen years. The Prime Minister then said that if he wished to see his mother he supposed he must let him go, and he sent a beautiful silk lamba to be given to her.

Shervinton gave him no time to change his mind, but immediately took him at his word, and promising to return on the least hint of a disturbance,

he hurried down to the coast to start on his six months' leave.

He arrived in London July 2, 1894. He had left it almost a boy, and came back a man who had seen much service and won the good opinion of all.

XVII

HOME TO ENGLAND AND HURRIED RETURN

ALL the time Shervinton was in England his movements were closely watched by the French, and anything that they fancied suspicious was immediately reported to headquarters. He had an immense number of friends and acquaintances, and was in great request everywhere, which was no doubt considered a most suspicious circumstance.

The French papers persisted in stating that Shervinton had come home for the purpose of purchasing arms, whereas the fact is that he never bought a gun, a musket, or a round of ammunition for the Hova Government.

The *Journal des Débats* states: "Preparations are being carried out in Madagascar to receive the large consignments of modern weapons now on their way out from England. . . . All these stores were, it is said, bought by the Englishman, Mr. Shervinton, in July."

A French paper from Madagascar says that "Mr. Shervinton, at present absent from Madagascar, will bring with him on his return twenty Englishmen to



Photo]

COLONEL ST. LEGER SHERVINTON.
1894

[C. Vandyk.

direct the fortifications ;" and a telegram from Marseilles announces the departure for Paris of two gentlemen "who have just returned from Madagascar, for the purpose of informing the Government of the means by which the English have completely destroyed the French Protectorate there, and of complaints more particularly of the doings of an individual named Shervinton. This man, whom they describe as a former non-commissioned officer in the British army, has become the Colonel of the Chief Artillery in Madagascar, and is said to have lately proceeded to London for the purpose of buying further armament. He is alleged to have always done his utmost to frustrate the French, and to have led the natives against them in 1884."

Shervinton merely laughed at the things which were said about him, and spent his time in renewing old friendships, making new acquaintances, and revisiting the scenes which had been familiar to him in his youth.

But when he heard that M. de Vilers was to be sent out again to Madagascar, affairs looked more serious. M. de Vilers' instructions were to insist upon the carrying out of the French interpretation of the Treaty of 1885, and it was said that his mission was of an entirely pacific character. But no concessions were to be made to the Malagasy, and if they refused to accept the terms offered, M. de Vilers was to call upon the Resident and all French subjects to withdraw immediately.

The fact was that the opportunity was to be seized to make fresh and important demands, with the

alternative of war in case of refusal, and as the French felt pretty certain that their demands would be refused, preparations for a campaign in Madagascar were already being actively carried on.

It was at first intended that the expedition should be ready to start in November, as soon as they could receive news of the anticipated failure of M. de Vilers' mission, but it was decided to put it off till spring, to avoid the great heat, as Madagascar lying to the south of the equator, the seasons are reversed.

M. de Vilers left Marseilles about September 14th. On his arrival at Antananarivo, October 14th, he wrote to the Prime Minister, informing him of his arrival, desiring an interview the following day, and asking for an audience of the Queen.

M. le Myre de Vilers presented the ultimatum, containing five principal points, which were to form the basis of a new treaty. These were briefly—

1. That the Malagasy Government were to have no official relations of any kind with other nations, except through the Resident-General.

2. All concessions given by the Malagasy Government to be registered at the French Residency and agreed to by the Resident.

3. The French Government to have authority to place soldiers in Madagascar, sufficient in their opinion for the security of those under their control and of foreigners.

4. The French to undertake public works and to receive the profits, unless the Malagasy undertook them themselves.

5. If any difficulty arose as to the meaning of

words in the treaty, the French text was to be followed.

M. de Vilers demanded a speedy reply.

The Prime Minister asked for time to consider, and finally promised to see M. de Vilers again on October 22nd. At this interview he was pressed to give a definite answer, but avoided doing so, and on the 24th he wrote to the French plenipotentiary with twelve counter proposals.

To this letter M. de Vilers did not even reply, but the following day he wrote unofficially to the Prime Minister, telling him that he did not seem to understand the position of affairs, and that peace or war were in his hands.

The Prime Minister replied that he earnestly desired the continuance of friendship between the two Governments, and that the Malagasy had done nothing to destroy the good relations between the two countries. This closed the correspondence.

M. de Vilers gave the Prime Minister up to the evening of October the 26th for a reply to the ultimatum, and none being received, on the morning of the 27th he hauled down his flag and departed to Tamatave. The Resident's escort, about eighty in number, started on their toilsome march for Mojunga at the same time. The usual route was by Tamatave. The French proceeded to Mojunga in order to survey and report on the route by the river Betsiboka and Ikopa to the capital.

Almost before negotiations had begun M. de Vilers had ordered all French residents to prepare to depart, and during his twelve days' stay at the

capital they had been gradually leaving, but before doing so it was said that they publicly burnt all their papers, clothes, bedding, &c., except what they could carry with them, and broke up all their glassware, crockery, &c.

Most of the ladies and invalids had left before this on the recommendation of the Resident, M. Larrouy, when he was recalled to France. Many of the French residents left unwillingly, especially the Roman Catholic priests and sisters, but they were given no choice.

M. de Vilers tried to frighten British subjects into leaving at the same time, but they preferred to remain, and the Malagasy Government promised them full protection.

It was suspected that Rasanjy was holding secret relations with the French, and he was being carefully watched, but nothing happened to confirm these suspicions.

M. de Vilers remained at Tamatave for some time, hoping that the Prime Minister would yet give in, but convinced at last that he had no intention of doing so, M. de Vilers took his final departure.

When the first rumours of the French expedition were heard Shervinton was visiting relations in Ireland. He telegraphed his immediate return to London, and within a week he was on board the *Dunottar Castle* on his return journey to Madagascar. During that week he scarcely slept or rested from the amount of business he had to get through, and the plans that he was ceaselessly turn-

ing over in his mind for the benefit of the country and the people he loved.

Shervinton was anxious to keep his departure as secret as possible, as it was quite certain that the French would do their best to prevent his landing, but it soon became known, and both French and English papers commented on it with all sorts of additions of their own.

One English paper stated that he was taking out with him "a posse of retired British officers to help him against the French troops"; and another that he was "accompanied by a small but picked engineering and artillery staff." The fact was that he was simply accompanied by one personal friend, Mr. Hamilton Weldon; but these and similar statements by no means helped to smooth matters with the French, and their papers were full of indignation.

The *Petit Parisien* "hoped that the French would treat English officers in the Hova service as savages, since it is as savages that they mean to make war on us;" and the *Gaulois* returned to the old tale of "a party of Englishmen going out to Madagascar to shoot French soldiers for the sake of sport." It declared such a thing quite possible when one thinks of the eccentricities to which the English give themselves up, and the means they make use of to bar the way of France all over the world. The *Figaro* accuses Englishmen of having practised this form of sport in Tonkin and Dahomey, but "It is consoling to find," says the *Gaulois*, "that the English Government has formally notified that it

disavows any British subjects who may be found fighting on the side of the Hovas, and therefore they may rest assured that, if once they raise a rifle against a French soldier, they will, if captured, be hung from the nearest tree without ceremony. They would not be worthy the honour of a shooting party."

It almost appears as if Shervinton's hurried return to Madagascar was looked upon as if preparing a filibustering expedition for the invasion of France, instead of a soldier simply doing his duty and returning to his post on the first threatening of danger to the country he had faithfully served for nearly ten years.

The *Temps* published what purported to be a sketch of Shervinton's career :—

"Colonel Shervinton belongs to an excellent Scotch family. During his youth he is said to have dissipated his fortune, and after travelling in France, Spain, and Algeria, he is described as having broken the bank at Monte Carlo, winning about 250,000 francs. He afterwards eloped with a *soi-disant* Russian princess, with whom he travelled about Europe for a year. In 1878 he embarked for South Africa, and enlisted in a company of Cavalry Volunteers, of which he became Captain. When that corps was disbanded, Shervinton went to Madagascar, where General Willoughby is said to have conferred on him the rank of Colonel, and where he exercised the functions of Chief of the Staff of the Hova Army. Until recently he directed a Hova Military Cadet College. He had been but a

short time absent in England on six months' leave when he heard of the departure of M. le Myre de Vilers for Madagascar. He embarked consequently in the *Dunottar Castle*, under the name of Smith, and landed at Mananjara. It is Colonel Shervinton who will have the real command of the Hova Army."

This amusing little bit of biography is characterised by General Bland Strange, R.A., in a letter to the *Globe*, as "a tissue of malevolent mis-statements," and after summing up Shervinton's career in a more accurate if less romantic fashion, he concludes by saying, "That he should quit his post in the hour of danger is hardly to be expected of a man of his stamp. *Bon chien chasse de race.*"

Shervinton had scarcely stepped on board the *Dunottar Castle* when he was recognised by a man who had served under him in the Cape Mounted Riflemen, and of course his identity—which he had hoped to preserve until they had left the shore—at once became known.

The reason he wished to keep it secret for the present was that it was probable the French Government would proclaim a blockade of the Malagasy ports, and ships would most likely be searched for contraband of war, and as he was so well known out there, it would be difficult to effect a landing. His plan was to land at Mahanoro or Vatomandry, and once ashore he felt pretty certain of getting inland by paths unknown to the French. Failing that he would go on to Mauritius, charter a sailing boat, and land wherever and whenever he could find

an opportunity. At the Cape he changed from the *Dunottar* to the *Dunbar Castle*.

A correspondent of the *Globe* gives an amusing account of his landing :—

“Booking my passage by a Castle liner, I found myself the fellow-passenger, among others, of the famous Colonel Shervinton. He is, and looks, a soldier from the crown of his head down to his heels. Some forty-two years of age, a little above the average height, a spare, wiry figure, a heavy moustache, frank face, and pair of blue eyes. There you have the Colonel’s appearance. He excels in all sports, both indoor and out, is a capital rider, and a generous friend. I may here remark that no one desires a peaceful solution of the Malagasy question more than Colonel Shervinton.

“We reached Mananjara on the 30th of October. The *Dunbar* was soon about to resume her course, when a private message came from shore to Colonel Shervinton to tell him a French man-o’-war had been sent off at an hour’s notice from Mauritius, and had been waiting some twenty-five miles north of Mananjara for several days to intercept the *Dunbar*. This action of the French was due to the indiscreet interview given by an ‘ex-British officer’ to the Press at home.

“Colonel Shervinton, essentially a man of action, being determined to run no risks of detention for the five or six days’ travelling he would save by landing at Vatomandry (farther on), even if permitted to do so, determined to go on shore at once with all his baggage.

"All the Englishmen on board, from the Captain down to the stokers, were ready to assist the Colonel, and in a few minutes, while the French passengers were taking their siesta, the Colonel and all his boxes were on board a lighter and *en route* for shore. We all crowded down to the stern to say goodbye, some enthusiastic officers dipping the ensign to the departing Colonel.

"We steamed away from Mananjara and towards early morning sighted our French friend the *Hugon*, who at once took us in hand, sailed into Vatomandry with us, and anchored alongside the *Dunbar*. The *Hugon* at once sent a boarding-party and read a long decree saying that 'war was to be declared on October 27th, unless the French terms had been accepted,' and ordered Captain Pierce to sign a declaration that he had no arms, &c., for the Malagasy. This the Captain did with the satisfactory feeling that the door was being locked when the horse was gone.

"I slept the night on shore at Vatomandry, and found all the French inhabitants in a state of panic.

"Next morning Captain Pierce came on shore and told me the French on board the *Hugon* and *Dunbar* were absolutely furious at the Colonel's having slipped through their fingers, and I confess this feeling was fully shared by their compatriots on shore.

"Towards evening nearly all the Frenchmen in Vatomandry had booked their passages and were on board the *Dunbar*. The impression spread among the French passengers that Colonel Sher-

vinton was on board, and that he was in hiding, and would be landed back at Mahanoro during the night. The result was a regular panic. A consultation of French was held and a member despatched to tell Captain Pierce that some important letters for the *Hugon* had been forgotten, and would he place a ship's boat at his disposal. Our gallant skipper regretted, &c. Having failed by strategy, other tactics were adopted, and all the French passengers tore down to the stern, and waved arms and handkerchiefs furiously. This brought no end of glasses and telescopes to bear from the *Hugon*, and no doubt the desired result of a boat being sent would have been the issue, but they timorously left off their demonstrations the moment any Britisher came near them, and at midnight the *Dunbar* proceeded on her way, followed at a distance by the French gunboat."

The *Madagascar News* of November 10, 1894, writes : "The *Dunbar Castle*, on its arrival off Tamatave, was immediately placed under surveillance by the Commandant of the French Squadron. The steamer was virtually placed in custody each night, two steam launches being each evening lowered from the French men-of-war and kept in the vicinity of the vessel, the Captain being informed that if he attempted to land cargo during the night, his vessel would be fired into.

"These outrageous proceedings were caused by the Commandant's suspicions that the *Dunbar* had on board materials of war. It is a gross insult to the Castle Company, for it is not for one moment

to be thought that a leading British Steamship Company would infringe national proclamations.

"We do not know whether the French would have seized Colonel Shervinton under the heading of war material had he attempted to land in Tamatave, but although he is a member of the Episcopal Church, we feel sure that had they done so, it would have been found that they had by no means seized a minor canon."

Mr. Weldon landed with all the baggage at Vatomandry; it was cleverly done, as everything was landed in darkness while the French were at dinner.

XVIII

SHERVINTON'S PLAN OF CAMPAIGN

SHERVINTON travelled through Fianarantsoa to the capital, doing the 350 odd miles in nine days, and arrived rather "run down" with the journey on November 11th.

He was at first very hopeful that he would get the Prime Minister to listen to reason, and take steps to preserve the independence of the country. As first officer of the Government which he had served for ten years he was naturally anxious to advise and help them to the best of his ability, although his own wishes and interests were entirely on the side of peace.

The Malagasy seemed determined to resist the encroachments of the French, but in their own way. They could not see the necessity of making preparations, strengthening their positions, or drilling their troops. Nothing could be done without direct permission from the Prime Minister, and he—shut up in his palace—either imagined that it would never come to a war, or else that the French would

be unable to overcome their two great enemies, *Hazo* and *Tazo* ("Fever" and "Forest").

For a long time Shervinton could not obtain an audience with him, for he arrived just before the great yearly festival of Fandroana, when all business is suspended, and after that was over the Prime Minister was ill.

Antananarivo was now without a single French inhabitant. When this had happened before in 1883, the French had been compelled to leave by the native Government. In 1894 they had left at the persistent command of M. le Myre de Vilers.

"De Vilers has acted just as I expected," writes Shervinton. "It was nothing but a case of bullying, notwithstanding all his fine assurances. I think there is now no escape from a row; we ought, however, to be able to make a good show. The Malagasy are enthusiastic on the war question, and offers of loans to the Government to carry it on are coming in from all parts of the country. It is a very curious thing De Vilers remaining at Tamatave, and trying to get the Prime Minister to reopen negotiations—which of course he won't do. I am not at all sure it is not a blind, as they have got their credit and cannot withdraw from the position without loss of prestige, and the Malagasy will never consent to a Protectorate unless compelled."

Shervinton spent an impatient month, trying to make the Prime Minister and his satellites see the necessity of doing something, and only wearing out himself in the endeavour. He was at all times ready to lead a forlorn hope, but not to go open-

eyed to wilful destruction, when such was avoidable. However, by nature he was hopeful and sanguine, and for a long time trusted that his counsels would prevail. Rasanjy, the confidential secretary, was suspected by some of having dealings with the French, but Shervinton never believed in this report, as his letters to Rasanjy will show—in fact he often tried to get at the Prime Minister through him.

“ANTANANARIVO, *December 10, 1894.*

“DEAR RASANJY,—It was a month yesterday since I returned to Madagascar, and I do not see that anything has been done during that time for the welfare of the country. I now enclose you a letter for His Excellency, in which, amongst other things, I have asked for an interview with Her Majesty. If I do not obtain it, and if His Excellency comes to no decision on the question of arms, ammunition, and officers, during this week, I shall send in my resignation on Monday morning next.

“I was quite sure after my interview on Friday afternoon, that the Prime Minister *does not* realise the gravity of the situation.

“I consider we require 50,000 men under arms at Mevatanana, Fianarantsoa, and Manjakandrianombana. There should also be a reserve here undergoing training.

“We have the men, but have we the rifles? If we have the rifles, have we the ammunition? I doubt our having two millions; say we have that quantity, it amounts to 40 rounds per rifle! The Cartridge

Factory *cannot* turn out 25,000 rounds a week, or 100,000 per month, or a little over 1,000,000 a year, which is 20 rounds per rifle. Are we only going to expend that amount per annum? If so, who is going to superintend the Factory? Mr. Hanning, I hear, refuses to go near the place, not having received any pay for twelve months.

"Surely you must see when you come to consider all I have said—and I have not said half what I know—how utterly hopeless the whole situation seems.

"During the last seven years I have foreseen this war, and have repeatedly urged His Excellency to prepare for it. What has he done? He got out 6 batteries which have never seen daylight since they first arrived. He got out an Artillery Instructor at the same time, who has never so much as had occasion to wear his uniform during the year and eight months that he has been in the Malagasy army. Can you be surprised at our all being disgusted?

"Yours ever,

"C. R. ST. LEGER SHERVINTON."

"MY DEAR COLONEL,—Yours to hand, and in reply I only wish to assure you that I quite agree with you on everything you have mentioned to make this campaign a success, and that I will use my influence to have them accepted, so as to attain that end.

"Yours as ever,

"RASANJY."

At length the Prime Minister allowed himself to be seen again, and Shervinton took every opportunity of urging him, if he meant to fight, to make preparations, and not let his people go like sheep to the slaughter. Naturally impatient, the endless delays were purgatory to him, although long years of intercourse with the procrastinating and apathetic Malagasy had somewhat sobered his eager spirit, and he said that he had learned among them to sit down and wait a month for anything. He now drew up a plan of campaign for the approval of the Prime Minister. He had studied his subject carefully during the years he had been in Madagascar, and knew all the weak points of their military system. He carefully set forth what he considered absolutely necessary to be done, if any stand at all was to be made against the French, and he laid special stress upon the scarcity of arms and ammunition.

COLONEL ST. LEGER SHERVINTON'S SUGGESTIONS
AND ADVICE.

"If the report is true that the French expedition has been increased to 30,000 men, it is tolerably certain that they will advance from more than one point, and we must prepare accordingly.

"The main attack will most certainly come *via* Mojunga. The other attacks will be less serious, but may develop into a real attempt, should the French meet with a repulse on the north-west. They will therefore require serious attention. The best plan, as I have already advocated, is to withdraw

MAP OF MADAGASCAR.

outlying garrisons and concentrate them at *important centres*.

"There are several routes from both East and West coasts leading to Antananarivo.

"*On the East are*—Maroantsetra (1), Tharana (2), Tamatave (3), Vatomandry (4), Mahanoro (5), Mananjara (6), Vatomasina (7).

"*On the West are*—Mojunga (1), Manambolo River (2), Tsiribihina River (3), Andakahe (4), Kitombo (5).

"East Coast.

"1. *Maroantsetra.* The road leads to Mandritsara, and is one of the most difficult I have travelled on. I think we can leave it out of the question.

"2. *Tharana.* Is a useful position in any attempt to secure the Northern part of the Island, or from which to cut off Antombaka, but of no value as a line of advance on Antananarivo.

"3. *Tamatave.* 4. *Vatomandry.* 5. *Mahanoro.* These three routes are the most direct to the capital. They are also the most difficult, and easily defended with a few men.

"6. *Mananjara.* 7. *Vatomasina.* I think there is a great probability that one of these routes may be selected as a second line of advance. I have always insisted that Fianarantsoa is the true 'objective point' in the first instance for an enemy endeavouring to conquer Madagascar. I am more inclined to think that Vatomasina may be selected because—1st. It is a fair harbour and easy

landing. 2nd. Because this route leads directly to the Ikongo.

" West Coast.

" 1. *Mojunga*. We must make up our minds that this will be the point from which the chief attack will come, and where most of our resources will be required.

" 2. *Manambolo*. 3. *Tsiribihina*. These rivers are said to be navigable for a considerable distance, but I doubt any advance from either.

" 4. *Andakahe*. 5. *Kitombo*. Both these lie on routes to Fianarantsoa, but I put Andakahe out of the question, and prefer to think Kitombo the most probable, as the river is navigable to within 60 miles of Fianarantsoa, and the last part of the way is practicable for a railway.

" What to do.

" It is clear that we cannot scatter our men and weapons all over the East and West coasts—that would be fatal. Our safety lies in *concentration*, and we must be ready to strike from *central* points at any route which the French may select. I always except Mojunga. The centres should be—Fianarantsoa (1), Antananarivo (2), Ambatandrazaka, or Mandritsara (3). Abandon Manjakandrionombana, Faradosay, and Solary."

" *Betongoa*—3,000 men, 6 12-prs., 2 revolvers, 3 Gardiners, 4 mortars.

“ *Antongolahodja*—1,000 men, 2 12-prs.

“ *Mevatanana*—1,500 men, 4 12-prs., 2 revolver-guns, 4 mortars, 1 12-pr. Armstrong, 2 Gardiners.

“ *Field Force*—25,000 men, 6 12-prs., 6 3-prs., 4 Gardiners. This force to be increased by Mojunga troops under Ramasombazaha, and 12,000 more men from the capital, with 6 12-prs. and 6 Maxims, who should arrive at Mevatanana not later than May 1st. 4,000 of these men may be spearmen.

“ If it be found possible to effectually check the enemy at Betongoa, this position may be occupied for a considerable time, and the whole of the north-west force employed there, with the exception of the garrison at Mevatanana and Antongolahodja.

“ The disadvantages of Betongoa are its distance and difficulty of obtaining supplies and reinforcements from Antananarivo, and the impossibility of holding it for any length of time *unless liberally supplied* with ammunition and food. It is unhealthy.

“ The question is ammunition and nothing else. Given $2\frac{1}{2}$ million rounds we should be able to check the French for a considerable time ; without it we must content ourselves by only harassing the French advance to Mevatanana, hold that position as long as possible, and then retire to a position I have selected north of Malatsy.

“ The sooner we realise the fact that we require 10 million rounds of small arm ammunition the better. Rifles also are required. We may possibly have sufficient (?) for this year's campaign, but there will be such wear and tear, as well as loss of arms, that a reserve is absolutely necessary.

"I desire to fight every inch of the ground right up to the capital, selecting and fortifying positions which will detain the enemy for days, perhaps weeks; but to do this we require to be sure of not running short of ammunition.

"I think the whole situation should be very carefully studied before we definitely commit ourselves to any plan of campaign. A position obstinately defended for, say six hours, against a determined attack would mean an expenditure of perhaps 150 to 250 rounds per rifle engaged. With our present supply of ammunition how many such attacks could we resist? There is *no doubt* we would be left absolutely without a cartridge after three such attacks. We might by means of reloaders ward off a fourth, but all the same the end *must* come.

"We threw away an opportunity of getting ammunition the other day; are we going to continue this suicidal policy, or can we not plan out a system by which we can efficiently supply the men, who are quite willing to fight?

"The army of the North should be as follows by May 1st:—

20,000 men, including 4,000 spearmen.	
250 rounds per rifle	= 4,000,000 !!!
24 12-pr. guns, 200 rounds	= 4,800
4 revolver guns, 500 rounds	= 2,000
9 Gardiners, 5,000 rounds	= 45,000
6 Maxims, 10,000 rounds	= 60,000
8 mortars, 100 or more rounds	= 800
6 3-prs. 200 or more rounds	= 1,200
1 Armstrong, 200 rounds.	= 200."

Everything was quiet at Antananarivo ; there were no more disputes over the exequatur or other vexed questions — all the French having left. It was difficult to imagine that the country was on the brink of a serious war, as everything went on precisely as usual, but nothing of any consequence was expected before April, by which time Shervinton hoped they would be in a position to hold their own at any rate ; and to this end he never ceased to urge the Prime Minister.

“ To HIS EXCELLENCY.

“ YOUR EXCELLENCY,—I learn on good authority that it is the intention of the French to land 12,000 men at Mojunga during the first week in April, and to immediately advance. At this moment they are preparing their transport, &c.; 84 guns as well as machine guns and engineers accompanying this force. Notwithstanding these preparations, which are authentic, I see no attempt being made, or likely to be made, on our side.

“ I have already pointed out to you in my letter of 20.11.94, what force would be required to oppose the French advance with any prospect of success. I have since informed you what was required to be done at once ; but beyond ordering 12 Maxim guns and engaging two European officers, I see no attempt to do anything.

“ I believe some 900 soldiers have been sent from Vonizonga, but I tell you they are *worse than useless*, being mere *schoolboys*, taken from school last year.

“ I consider 8,000 *old soldiers*, 18 12-pounders,

2 revolver Hotchkiss, and 6 Gardiners, with 250 rounds per soldier, 200 per gun, 500 per revolver, and 5,000 per Gardiner, should be despatched *at once*, and a further 12,000 men later on.

"I consider all our preparations should be completed by the end of March.

"I reckon it will take ten days to assemble and equip 8,000 men ; that it will take twenty-eight days for them to reach Mevatanana, which would bring us to March 2nd, only leaving us twenty-eight days to make extensive fortifications, and get the soldiers into some sort of order.

"I am aware that your Excellency is much occupied, I therefore urge you to form a Military Council of which I and Captain Hall shall be members.

"I have the honour, &c.,

"C. R. ST. LEGER SHERVINTON."

Apparently the Prime Minister did pay some little attention to this and other letters, and Shervinton got permission to go to the north-west to attend to affairs there, and Captain Hall and Mr. Weldon were to follow in about six weeks. However, he was not to go without settling the final details with the Prime Minister, and then came the usual difficulties. The embankment of the river broke again, and threatened to destroy the rice-fields which are the chief support of the large population of Antananarivo. The Prime Minister could attend to nothing else for three weeks, and doubtless was glad of it ; as between his fear of the French, and his fear of losing the country, the poor old man

was distracted and unwilling to give his consent to anything. Shervinton was having heliographs made to connect Mevatanana with the capital.

There was a report that the French had found a quicker and easier route, but Shervinton continued to think that they would come by Mojunga, though he wished to be prepared for any way they might choose. Mr. Sauzier, a Mauritian, who was now British Consul at Tamatave, found himself unable to forward any more letters coming under cover to him, so Shervinton's letters from England had to be sent through friends at Durban, and they had to ask the captains of the steamers to deliver them to another friend at Vatomandry. This roundabout way of receiving news was most vexatious, as everything about the French preparations, &c., came out from Europe and was of course much delayed. In the beginning of March there was a big review of last year's levy—20,000 men—and of course, nothing could be thought of.

On February 12th was held one of the largest Kabarys which had assembled for many years. From 80,000 to 100,000 people were supposed to have been present; some said over 100,000. The Queen and Prime Minister sat under a canopy, the ladies and officers of the household grouped behind them. The Queen wore a dress of white silk embroidered with gold, a train of ruby velvet, and a diamond necklace, and carried a sceptre in her hand. The Prime Minister wore a uniform of white silk, with a helmet and plume; his breast was covered with decorations.

The Queen addressed the people, telling them she would prosecute the war to the utmost of her power, and, if necessary, lead the people herself in defence of the land which God and her ancestors had given her. She then sat down amidst immense enthusiasm.

The various chiefs then came forward and spoke, pledging themselves to support the war in every way, even to selling the coats off their backs. They said there were no longer any civilians in the country, all were now soldiers; and amidst intense excitement the "Alakarabo," or old soldiers, who had served in the last war, came forward and demanded instantly to be sent to the front.

Then the Prime Minister kneeling, presented "Hasina" in the form of a dollar, and was followed by the chiefs, who each presented "Hasina," a token of fealty. The Prime Minister announced that he would hold a military Kabary on Thursday, outside the town; and the vast assemblage quietly melted away.

But what did all this enthusiasm amount to? Words, merely words, for time went on and still no preparations were made.

At last Shervinton, indignant and impatient, and seeing no hope of getting anything done, placed his resignation in the hands of Rasanjy to deliver to the Prime Minister.

Rasanjy wrote back immediately in some agitation, March 4th :—

"MY DEAR COLONEL,—I have received your

letter of last evening, and I must beg of you to authorise me not to deliver the one to His Excellency. You know that Miss —— is doing her best, and I think we ought to wait until we see the result of her efforts before we take steps and send your resignation.

“I hope most sincerely that you will listen to me when I say that we ought to wait until Thursday, when I think that something satisfactory might be got, and they have already decided to send the men and guns as soon as this review is over.

“It is not *met*y to deliver it to-day, when we know that their attentions are drawn to this review ; but if Miss —— can arrange it for to-day, well and good. I still believe, as I have told you, that she—the Queen—will receive you.

“Kindly say a word in reply,

“Yours as ever,

“RASANJY.”

Shervinton had demanded an audience of the Queen, which was not granted. It was supposed that she was quite in the hands of the French party—for there was a very strong pro-French party among the Malagasy noblemen, who were only eager to play into the hands of the invaders of their country, and were doing all they could to oust Shervinton from the post of Commander-in-Chief.

They wished to have a Hova Prince in supreme command, and to keep Shervinton at the capital as Military Adviser. To this he would not submit ; he

would either command them in the field, or leave them to their fate. Well he knew that as military adviser he would get the credit of all their reverses, while little attention would be paid to his advice.

While he was striving his utmost to obtain what was absolutely necessary for the proper conduct of the campaign, the pro-French party, headed by Prince Ramahatra, who had been made Commander-in-Chief, were for ever trying to impress upon the Prime Minister the unreasonableness of his demands, and how much better and more moderately the whole thing could be done under Malagasy generals.

XIX

RESIGNATION OF SHERVINTON AND HIS OFFICERS

IT was well known that at this time the Queen and the Prime Minister were on very bad terms, and that the latter was powerless. "A strong French party," says the *Times*, "headed by near relatives of the Prime Minister, have the ear of the Queen, and are doing everything in their power to overturn the Government. Unfortunately two or three unscrupulous Englishmen with nothing to lose are egging on the French party. They go about with letters purporting to be copies or extracts of correspondence Colonel Shervinton had with the French whilst in England last year, and in which he proposed to betray Madagascar to France. These people are trying to persuade the Government that there is no chance of the French reaching the capital, and advocate a policy of inaction. The soldiers who have been sent to the front are deserting by hundreds, particularly those of Ime-rina. One of the Prime Minister's sons, well-known as being on intimate terms with the French, is the

chief of this division, and has accepted large bribes to free them from military service (a common occurrence). Naturally all this has given great cause of dissatisfaction to Colonel Shervinton and his staff. Consequently he insisted upon immediate reform or the resignation of himself and his officers."

On being persuaded to withdraw his resignation for the second time, Shervinton had promised to remain and undertake the charge of the campaign, on condition that troops were sent to the district of Mojunga with sufficient arms and ammunition, and that he should be allowed a free hand and only be responsible to the Queen or Prime Minister. To this the Prime Minister agreed; it was considered settled, and Shervinton expected to start at once to defend the route from Mojunga.

The officials were anxious that he should go in person and fortify the positions at the front, but he declined to do so unless he had a sufficient number of men to occupy them. He required from 20,000 to 25,000 men. It was utterly useless to send a handful.

Shervinton received plenty of promises, but nothing was done, although he pointed out that time was going by. Month after month passed and only a few hundred troops were sent to the front, although he impressed upon the Government that months of labour would be necessary to properly entrench troops in the positions he had selected. He believed that one reason the Hovas had for not complying with his wishes was their fear of denuding the capital of arms and ammunition.

Almost heart-broken at their apathy and indifference, and regarding the situation now as absolutely hopeless, Shervinton announced his intention of resigning unless his conditions were accepted in a week. He was most unwilling to leave the Malagasy at such a time, but under the circumstances his presence was useless, and his patience was worn out with offering advice which was not taken and seeing every necessary precaution neglected. No reply having been received at the end of the week, he sent in his third and final resignation.

As soon as this became publicly known a meeting of European officers was held, which passed a vote of confidence, deciding to uphold him in whatever he did, and they then resigned in a body, their reason being, "That Colonel Shervinton having resigned, we could but follow his example, he being our superior officer. Moreover, we consider that Colonel Shervinton was the only man in Madagascar fitted to command the Malagasy troops in the field. It would be impossible to serve under Malagasy officers as military advisers ; owing to the strong feeling of jealousy that exists among the noble class against European officers, our advice would in all probability not be acted upon, and we should be in a most ridiculous and insecure position."

Though he declined to remain except on his own terms, Shervinton parted from the Prime Minister in the most friendly manner. He considered his resignation an unfortunate but unavoidable occur-

rence. That they parted on the best of terms is evident from the fact that the day before his departure the Prime Minister came down to his house to bid him goodbye—an honour rare for a European to receive, but which was also accorded to Mr. Parrett, who resigned a fortnight earlier, and who had been the faithful political adviser of the Malagasy for thirty years.

Shervinton's farewell interview with the Prime Minister was very touching. The old man with tears in his eyes expressed his sorrow at Shervinton's departure, thanked him for all his past services, and asked why he was leaving him after so many years of confidence.

Laying his hand on the Prime Minister's shoulder Shervinton replied, "Because, Prime Minister, the country has been sold, and some of your own relations have sold it."

The Prime Minister was deeply affected as he acknowledged that circumstances were too strong for him and that he could make no head against the intrigues which were fostered by the Europeans "who remained." He added that he yet hoped things would mend, and if they did, would Shervinton come back? He replied, "Certainly, if he could do so." Both the Queen and Prime Minister gave farewell presents to Shervinton and his wife.

The day before he left there was a Cabinet Council, at which a letter of his was read. He had written it in February, 1894, nearly eighteen months before, when he knew a war was coming on, stating his opinions as to the tactics the French

would adopt, and how they were to encounter them. He said the French would clear their front on the lines on which they meant to advance, and not leave a Malagasy behind them. Members of the Cabinet Council said after the meeting, "We do not want any further proof of Colonel Shervinton's conduct. How is it possible for any man to foretell exactly what the French would do except he were in their pay and confidence?" This news was carried to Mr. Parrett, and when the bearers of it heard that Shervinton had left that morning they said it was as well, because if any more of his prognostications came true his life would not be worth one minute's purchase. So much for gratitude!

When the French heard of Shervinton's impending departure it was said that their attitude became almost cordial, and that they had even placed a gunboat at his disposal to convey him and the other officers from the island. Mr. Sauzier, Consul at Tamatave, let it be known that the French were jubilant at the resignations and confidently expected the expedition to have a "walk over."

On Shervinton's departure from Antananarivo he was presented with the following address, signed by the English and American residents:—

"We feel that, on the eve of your departure from Madagascar, some more formal token than the ordinary saying of goodbye is required.

"It is with unfeigned regret that we view you and other British and American officers leaving the country at this juncture, for we all held your presence here to be a sure guarantee that the

interests of the Malagasy were in the safest hands. The reason for your going is well known to us, and indeed, under the circumstances, no other alternative remained open to you as a soldier and a gentleman but to resign your commission as you have done.

"That you have acted in so straightforward a manner when you found your counsel and plans were being continuously disregarded or ignored, was what those who knew you confidently expected. Your course in this grave crisis of affairs, in refusing longer to be directly or indirectly a party to lulling the Malagasy Government or nation into a false sense of security, is, we hold, a further proof of your sterling honesty and uprightness; you choose to do that which is right, even to the hurt and jeopardy of yourself and your career, and we prize your friendship all the more for your dignified and manly resolution in so trying a situation. It only remains for us to wish you health and happiness wherever you go.

"We shall greatly miss you and your excellent wife and family from among us, for you and Mrs. Shervinton were ever foremost in good offices, and in helping to make life and society agreeable in Antananarivo. May God speed and safely guard you and yours is ever our earnest prayer."

Shervinton had but little time to make arrangements before his departure. His well-furnished house, on which he had spent so much, had to be left just as it was, to the mercy of any one who chose to inhabit it. He left money to carry on the

coffee estate at Moromanga for another year. The Malagasy Government owed him £600, but he did not like to press them for money at such a time, and afterwards, of course, there was no chance of getting anything. He never for one moment imagined that the French would confiscate all his property, or rather refuse to recognise it as his at all. He considered that the treaty of 1890 guaranteed the safety of British interests, and he thought his coffee estate and gold concession were as absolutely safe as a Frenchman's possessions would have been had the position been reversed and the English had taken Madagascar.

Shervinton's friends were glad to hear of his safe arrival at Tamatave, as some anxiety had been felt. But he was determined that he would never fall alive either into the hands of the French or of Malagasy rebels.

It was rumoured that he was leaving for Europe, invested by the Prime Minister with full powers to negotiate with the French Government; but this was only one of many absurd reports. The time for negotiation had gone by, and the French expedition was ready to start.

Various newspaper men tried to interview Shervinton, but he was very careful what he said, as he did not wish to give the Malagasy away.

"I left," he said, "because they would not carry out my repeated requests. For instance, instead of sending 20,000 men for a certain purpose they would send 3,000. The Malagasy are now practically left wholly to themselves. The country is very rough,

but I do not think the natural barriers and fever dangers so stupendous as represented. The common people are anxious to fight, but they will be overcome by sending against the French only two or three thousand of the worst class, who being defeated, those above will say, 'You see we must give in, we cannot resist the French.' As a fact, the Government *dare* not have given in at any time. The people themselves would not hear of it. There may be skirmishes, but I do not think there will be any serious resistance. What they want is a leader. But I am certain that they will make a stand for their capital. I hope to return in time to Madagascar, as I have property and valuable interests there. As to the malicious statements made about me I did not care, for I could have lived them down."

The papers all made lengthy comments.

"The situation," says one, "has undergone a complete change, and matters now look very bad for the Malagasy. The European officers have resigned in a body. Mr. Parrett, the friend and confidential adviser of the Government for thirty years, resigned on February 28th, hoping that this step would bring the Government to its senses and so avert the threatened resignation of the others, but it had not the desired effect. Colonel St. Leger Shervinton found it impossible to make the Government realise the dangers it has to face or to agree to the preparations he considered necessary in order to avert them. It is current gossip that the Prime Minister has not dared to notify to the Queen in the usual way the step taken by the European officers.

She, however, knows of it from private sources. The high Malagasy officers are delighted, as they will now have every opportunity of robbing their men without fear of consequences, and of accepting bribes to allow them to desert. Colonel Shervinton is the only man in the whole of this island qualified, both from knowledge of the Malagasy and the country and from military experience, to conduct a campaign. The Prime Minister hopes that there may yet be a change in his attitude and that he will remain. But this is impossible. The opportunity for effectually checking the French has gone by. The people are very sorry to see them go, but are powerless to prevent it. Colonel Shervinton has all along been in favour of a peaceful solution. No news is allowed into the palace except what may suit the French party."

Another paper says : "The great foresight of the Hovas is clearly shown in the dismissal of the English officers. For such an officer as Colonel Shervinton to have command of the Hova forces when there is a prospect of real fighting to be faced would never do ! Colonel Shervinton might *make* them fight, and would certainly do his utmost towards that end ; in which case it would be far more difficult for the princes to look after their individual interests than it will be now that each prince or chief has command of his own slave soldiers. Corrupt practices are rife amongst the military officers and high civil authorities. A son of the Prime Minister who holds a high command is said to have been bought over, so that it is

anticipated the way of the French will be made easy."

Shervinton brought home with him two devoted Malagasy servants. They had been slaves, but he had purchased their freedom, and they had been with him for years. The woman Rasanabela was the children's nurse and entirely wrapped up in them. The young man Cuta was Shervinton's personal attendant, and when he heard that he was to be left behind he cried and begged so piteously to be taken too that Shervinton felt obliged to consent, and they are still with his family. A sum of money had to be paid for permission to take them out of the country.

The Prime Minister soon began to regret that he had allowed Shervinton to depart, and was in great hopes that he could get him back again. Mr. Bennet Burleigh wrote to a friend from Antananarivo on July 12, 1895: "Tell Colonel Shervinton, if you see him, that the Prime Minister misses his services now. He told Mr. Porter that he was anxious to have him back. He asked where the Colonel was, and whether it would be possible for him to return here in two or three weeks if he (the Prime Minister) wrote to him. It was of course explained to the Prime Minister that it was too late now to expect anything of the kind."

But the poor old man continued to hope that it might be possible. He was surrounded by self-seekers and untrustworthy counsellors, and missed the loyal and straightforward advice which he had always received from Shervinton.

Queen Ranavalona too began to regret the turn which matters had taken, and saw that she had been foolish in wishing to leave matters entirely in the hands of Malagasy officials. With her consent, if not by her command, the Prime Minister wrote the following letter to Shervinton :—

“ANTANANARIVO, *July 20, 1895.*

“COLONEL C. R. ST. LEGER SHERVINTON.

“DEAR FRIEND,—I write this letter to express to you the desire of Her Majesty the Queen and myself for you to return to Madagascar and serve the Government as you did before.

“We trust, therefore, that on receipt of this notification you will start at once.

“May God bless you,

“Saith your sincere friend,

“RAINILAIARIVONY,

“*Prime Minister.*”

But this letter did not reach Shervinton until long afterwards, and of course it was much too late to return. With his departure from Madagascar his career came practically to an end, but he continued to watch the development of events in that country with the deepest interest. “I always believed,” he said, “that the Malagasy would make a stand for their capital, and this they undoubtedly did. Had any proper preparations been made for its defence I still think the flying column of General Duchesne might have been compelled to retire. Being without reserves of any kind, they could not have main-

tained themselves in a barren and hostile country. That the Hovas *can* fight is evidenced by the amount of trouble and anxiety the robber bands—composed mainly of deserters and runaway slaves—have caused the French troops during the past twelve months. But what they really required was a leader."

Shervinton looked confidently forward to the restoration of his property when the war came to an end. But he had not calculated on the personal animosity of the French. His valuable properties had been acquired in strict conformity with international and Malagasy laws. But now they were at the absolute mercy of the local French Government, which on the conquest of the island refused to recognise the just claims of Englishmen.

The coffee estate at Moromanga, on which so much labour, time, and energy had been expended (as well as between £6,000 and £7,000), had in November, 1897, "practically ceased to exist," as reported by the manager when permitted to visit the property. The labourers, brought from a distance of 200 miles, were taken away for forced labour. The old coffee trees were mostly dead, or dying and broken. The nurseries and young plantations had vanished.

Thus ended an enterprise of which the manager, in concluding his Report, said: "Had I only been left alone I think I should have had no difficulty in making this estate one of the finest plantations in the world."

On his auriferous estate of Amboanana his representatives were refused permission to work or other-

wise to deal with it. Yet French speculators were allowed to settle on the property for their individual advantage, while its owners in vain remonstrated.

Thus at the end of eighteen years' hard work in distant lands, during which time he never spared himself any difficulty or danger, Shervinton came home despoiled of all he had worked so hard and paid so dearly for. He was a changed man from the time he quitted Madagascar, for he never quite got over the bitter disappointment of having to leave at such a time, and the downfall of all the hopes of so many years.

He died in April, 1898, aged 45, his end hastened by a severe attack of fever—the fatal “Tazo” of Madagascar, so much dreaded by Europeans.

XX

THE FRENCH CAMPAIGN IN MADAGASCAR

I WILL now briefly recapitulate the course of the war with the French and the events which took place in Madagascar after the departure of Shervinton and his officers, but must first hark back a little.

On November 13, 1894 (just as Shervinton reached Antananarivo on his hurried return journey), in the French Chamber the Minister for Foreign Affairs demanded 15,000 men and 65,000,000 francs for an expedition to Madagascar. Forty million francs was for the army and 25,000,000 francs for the navy, but it was said that the whole of this sum was expended before a single soldier embarked. The entire commerce of France with the island amounted only to 2,000,000 francs per annum.

In December Tamatave was occupied by French troops, and the garrison at Diego Suarez reinforced. General Metzinger was in command of between 3,000 and 4,000 men, and was exploring and clearing the road for the expeditionary force. The young men of Réunion and French East Africa

were invited to volunteer for service in Madagascar and sent a contingent.

Queen Ranavalona ordered the evacuation of Farafatra, on the ground that it was best to abandon the coast to the French and concentrate the troops near the capital ; but the Governor refused to quit his post, and on several occasions endeavoured to shell the French at Tamatave with but little success.

Desultory fighting was carried on between Mobjunga and Maravoay and various posts occupied by the French, with small show of resistance from the Malagasy. The fortress of Ambohimerina was besieged on and off, but held out for some time. It stands 800 feet above the sea, which bounds it on the east, and practically commands the entrance to Madagascar from Diego Suarez.

Early in April the vanguard of the expedition landed on the north-west coast.

On April 27th an attack, which was repulsed, was made on Maravoay, but on May 2nd it was taken by a night surprise and the Hovas driven out, leaving eighty dead behind ; their total loss was estimated at 300. The French loss was one man killed and five wounded. This was a serious loss for the Malagasy, as Maravoay was their principal depôt for arms, ammunition, and stores, all of which fell into the hands of the French. When the poor old Prime Minister heard that Maravoay was taken it is said that he wept bitterly, wringing his hands and saying, "Oh, if my Vazahas (Europeans) had been here such a misfortune would never have befallen us. They are gone, and

I have no one whom I can trust, or who can advise me."

Ramasombazaha, the Governor of Maravoay, was arrested by order of the Queen on the charge of not defending the place and of neglecting to destroy the arms and stores before retreating. He was brought to Antananarivo, and after a summary trial condemned to death, but was afterwards pardoned and reinstated.

General Duchesne, the commander of the expeditionary force, embarked at Marseilles on April 12th, and landed at Mojunga on May 5th.

The transports conveying materials of war met with several accidents—one was nearly lost in a hurricane and another came into collision with a British ship—and as these transports had been either bought or hired from Englishmen, naturally every misfortune was attributed to the malice of the English. M. de Mahy, that rabid Anglophobe, said so plainly, adding that the country capable of such iniquity should be made to suffer for it.

When a Frenchman was murdered in Madagascar the English Consul was blamed, and two Englishmen who were taken while endeavouring to pass the French outposts at Tamatave were treated in a manner unworthy of any civilised nation. Mr. Bennet Burleigh, the war correspondent, was threatened with hanging if he could be caught, and M. de Mahy stated that he attributed any French failures in Madagascar to the interference of the English.

Early in May there were eighteen French trans-

ports in the harbour at Mojunga, and 8,000 troops were distributed between that place and Maravoay. The French advance was very slow ; the country was difficult, and the road to Andriba—over 200 kilometres—was being made as they went, in order to allow of the passage of the wagons.

A succession of small engagements followed one another, the French of course being successful. "The Hovas have shown themselves in the worst light," said a correspondent ; "half an hour is the longest time they have ever stood. Their leaders have shown themselves cowardly, self-seeking, and entirely incompetent."

Early in June the French occupied Mevatanana without any resistance. The advance guard marched in and found the town completely deserted. Mevatanana was looked upon as the first stage of the campaign, and here the French waited for a time collecting stores of food, &c. The river flotilla consisted of twelve gunboats, thirty-three barges, and smaller crafts, but the Betsiboka afterwards became too shallow for the gunboats.

For convoy service by land they had 3,600 Lefebvre wagons, 40 tank cars, 800 pack mules, and 7,000 coolies.

By the end of July the road was completed to Superbieville, and the mètre bridge, 500 feet long, afforded the wagons passage over the Betsiboka. But Superbieville was very unhealthy, and everywhere fever was ravaging the French troops. At Tamatave they were in a deplorable condition.

In August there were 5,000 sick in the various

hospitals, and "the number of dead," said a French officer, "will never be known in France."

The road made by General Duchesne from the coast to Andriba, half-way to the capital, through a most unhealthy part of the country, was the cause of great mortality. The men had to work in the burning sun, and often in swampy ground. This road is said to have cost the lives of 1,500 French soldiers. According to the *Temps*, out of 2,000 French troops who had perished, scarcely fifty had died in battle or of wounds. Suicides, disappearances, and deaths in the bush helped to swell the number, and 7,000 men had entered the various hospitals. Sad to think that of the 15,000 men who left France amidst fêtes and ovations at least a third were never to return; and fresh drafts were constantly coming out to fill the gaps left by sickness and death.

The 200th Regiment suffered most, as it was composed of men far too young to resist the climate, though twenty-one was the minimum of age; but with all the other hard work every man was supposed to carry 85 lbs. weight. The three battalions of this regiment (composed of volunteers from other line regiments) were formed into one, but a very small proportion of them returned to France.

The number of deaths among the French troops was said to be 45 a day, and at the end of September the total number amounted to 4,000.

The Algerian Regiment was the one that suffered least. Of 800 men belonging to the Engineering

Corps, there were only 120 capable of performing their duty. As for the Hovas, they were deserting *en masse*, and scarcely made an attempt at a stand anywhere; as soldiers they showed themselves beneath contempt, and often ran off without firing a shot; but the truth was that they were only doled out a few rounds of ammunition at a time, it was so scarce. As post after post was taken by the French the Hovas at the capital began to feel real alarm.

Queen Ranavalona sent a message to England desiring the prayers and sympathy of all Christian people in this time of deep trouble, and the Prime Minister wrote to Shervinton trying to induce him to return, but he was on his way to England. Intrigues were rife at the court.

Two of the Prime Minister's sons, together with the two chief secretaries, were reported to be under arrest, suspected of treasonable correspondence. On hearing the report, Shervinton said of the two secretaries, "I knew both men—Rasanjy and Rabisoa—intimately. They were, and always had been, perfectly loyal. I can only attribute their arrest to the French party in the capital having brought false charges against them. With regard to the Prime Minister's two sons, their arrest causes me no surprise; they always belonged to the French party."

The Prime Minister was asked whether he would guarantee the safety of the foreigners in case of the French reaching the capital. He replied that not being able to insure his own existence in these troubled times, he was still less able to guarantee that of others.

Soon after this all foreigners were requested to leave the capital, the Prime Minister saying that he was able to offer them safe conduct now ; but who could say that he would be able to do it later on ?

Shervinton's plan of campaign had not been followed by the Malagasy in the remotest degree. "Had I remained in the Malagasy service," he said, "and directed operations, the French would have met with resistance every step of the way. I should have commenced harassing them at Mojunga, and their serious work would have begun sixty miles from the coast. From there every inch of ground would have been a battlefield. I would have taken a picked Hova force from the capital and entrenched it near Ambato ; at the same time, I should have so blocked and mined the river that the whole of the French force would have had to come into action at that one point. In spite of the comparatively quick advance of the French, if the Hovas yet make any organised resistance the tricolour will not be hoisted in the capital this year."

But one year—or another—what mattered ?

Shervinton knew that the end must come ; and to fight every inch of the way only meant the loss of countless lives. The real misfortune was that the Hovas refused to listen to him and to Mr. Parrett in the first instance, and to accept the French ultimatum, by which war *might* have been averted.

Mr. Bennet Burleigh said that from the time the English officers left, the French might have taken the route to the capital and marched into it with 5,000 men.

On August 22nd Andriba was taken. This was the second stage of the campaign. The French, with five batteries of artillery and several machine-guns, poured a destructive fire upon the Malagasy, who replied for a time.

The bombardment continued for several hours, and the Hovas streamed away to the rear, out of their works, and retreated about twenty miles. Only one French soldier was killed and three wounded.

The Hovas hoped great things from this fortified town, and were alarmed at its being taken with so little resistance. Fresh levies of raw recruits were sent out. There was no lack of men ; it was the want of arms and ammunition that was a serious drawback, and many of the new recruits were only armed with spears. At Andriba, the long road (which a Frenchman described as a Calvary) came to an end.

General Duchesne remained here for three weeks, organising a Flying Column to advance upon the capital. It was composed of 5,000 men, with 3,000 mules for transport. It comprised four battalions of infantry, four battalions of marines, two batteries of artillery, two companies of engineers, and two squadrons of cavalry, taking with them supplies for twenty-two days.

The Flying Column started from Andriba on September 10th, one wing under the command of General Metzinger and the other under General Voyron.

They advanced steadily upon the capital, occupying post after post, the Hovas falling back before them and retreating upon Antananarivo.

Here all were in a state of anxiety ; drilling and target-practice were being carried on in a thoroughly inefficient manner, and more recruits were being called out. Rasanjy—chief secretary, and entirely ignorant of military duties—was made a field-marshal and sent to the front with 1,500 men, all that remained of the last levy ; but he never saw the French, although they were only five hours' march from the capital. Prince Ramahatra was also sent to the front with 2,000 men ; it was he who had led the native agitation against the appointment of Shervinton as commander-in-chief of the Malagasy army. A great Kabary was held, and the Queen addressed the people from a balcony, looking ill and anxious. She told her subjects that they had sworn to fight for her, the descendant of their kings, but instead they had basely betrayed her. She wept bitterly as she said she would die in her palace.

The people, touched to the quick, cried out, " We will all go, and fight till we are killed ! "

But what good ? They were as sheep without a shepherd ! There were only 10,000 troops between the French and the capital, and these were daily deserting and coming in to Antananarivo, round which over 200,000 people must have been gathered. But there was no leader and no organisation, and the incessant drilling was utterly useless.

On September 29th heavy firing could be heard at Ilafy, a few miles from the capital.

In the afternoon large bodies of French troops were seen on the ridge about three miles off. They

passed close to a Hova battalion and battery, but not a shot was exchanged; farther on a few shots were fired at them ineffectually, but they quickly moved behind a hill and encamped for the night. Their march to the capital had occupied four months. Shervinton, travelling lightly, had made the same journey in 1885 in twenty days.

Next morning at daybreak they could see the French officers taking the ranges, while the Hovas were busily raising a mud wall to the north, where it could be of no earthly use.

The two forces, about two miles apart, faced each other from the ridges, with a valley between. The French commenced to fire from all their batteries, and the Hovas replied for a little time, but they soon melted away under the French fire, although little harm was done.

It was said that "the native cadets who had been trained by Shervinton and his officers alone made any real fight. They served their guns steadily, many of them in a fine, soldier-like manner, worthy of all praise. One little cadet stuck to his gun with a few of his men when all the others had bolted."

By noon the French had carried the high hills close to the city, and the Hovas fled in all directions, though a couple of their batteries continued to fire on the French troops.

Three melinite shells struck the palace, and a fourth, bursting in the crowded courtyard, killed a number of people in the Queen's sight. She could bear no more, and ordered a flag of truce to be run up. In a perfectly orderly manner General

Duchesne's troops marched in and took possession of all the important buildings.

The French losses on this occasion were about 50 killed and wounded. The Malagasy lost between 200 and 300. The English residents helped to carry the French wounded to the Mission Hospital as soon as firing ceased, and gave them every care.

The Prime Minister and eight members of the Cabinet were made prisoners.

Peace negotiations were opened on October 1st, and the treaty was signed by General Duchesne for France, and by Rasanjy Rarakombana for Madagascar.

The treaty set forth that the Queen recognises and accepts the Protectorate of France, with all its consequences.

That the French Government has the right to maintain in the country what military forces it judges necessary.

That the Resident-General shall control the internal administration of the island.

That the Queen undertakes to effect such reforms as the French shall judge necessary.

General Duchesne announced his intention of maintaining Ranavalana Manjaka on the throne; but of course she was a mere puppet in his hands.

By his "advice," the Queen dismissed the Prime Minister Rainilaiaravony, and appointed in his place the former Minister of the Interior, Rainitsimbazafy, whose father, Rainijoary, had been Prime Minister under King Ranavalao I.

In Paris solemn "Te Deums" were sung in all

the churches for the French victories in Madagascar ; but the Colonial party (like the Irish Nationalists) were never satisfied. It was not a Protectorate they demanded, but annexation.

On the 15th of October Rainilaiarivony was taken out of the city under a strong guard, and imprisoned in the neighbourhood. In the following April he was deported to Algeria, accompanied by his grandson and two interpreters. He was very despondent, as he said, "I shall not see again the land of my ancestors, but I hope that my ashes may rest beside them and my children, whom I have so much loved. That is my only desire, and I hope that France will listen to an old man's prayer." But he did not long survive his exile ; in September, 1896, he died broken-hearted.

Six months later Madagascar was described by a scientific traveller as having fallen into a worse state of anarchy than had prevailed there for thirty-three years.

The *Gaulois* stated that a fresh expedition of 12,000 men was to be despatched, and that a vote of 20,000,000 francs had been asked for it. But France would hardly stand that. The island was in a state of revolt, and the stern and implacable General Gallieni was sent out to combine the duties of Resident-General and Commander-in-Chief.

General Duchesne had sailed from Mojunga in January, 1896, and M. Laroche arrived at the same time as Resident-General ; but his rule was considered too mild, and he was recalled.

When General Gallieni arrived he declined to call

on the Queen, saying that his position required that she should call on him first, and he would inform her when she could come !

Two of the princes, charged with complicity in the rebellion, which was spreading in all directions, were sentenced to death by court-martial and executed. One was Rainandrianampandry, who had defended Farafatra during the war, and refused to evacuate it when ordered by the Queen to give it up to the French. General Duchesne had subsequently made him Minister of the Interior. The other prince who was executed was Ratsimananga, an uncle of the Queen. Rainandrianampandry spoke English well, and had compiled a Malagasy-English vocabulary.

The new Prime Minister now resigned, and no successor was appointed.

The Queen's aunt, Ramasindrazana, was exiled to Réunion ; also her sister and an uncle.

Finally, in March, 1897, Queen Ranavalona III. was deposed and banished to Réunion. She wept bitterly as she left her kingdom, where she had reigned for twelve years, the last monarch of Madagascar. And in 1899 she was banished to Algeria, embarking at Réunion on February 1st.

The annexation of Madagascar was now complete. We all know how British interests have suffered in that island since its occupation by the French. Yet on the treaty of 1885 being signed, the text of it was sent by M. de Freycinet to the Ambassadors of France at all the Courts of Europe, with this note :—

"You may say, if you are questioned concerning the treaty which we have just signed with the Hova Plenipotentiaries, that this treaty, if ratified by the two Governments, changes nothing in the treaties already existing between the Hova Government and other States. It has, moreover, never entered into our thoughts to place an obstacle by these arrangements to the free development of private interests which might be established in Madagascar, to whatever nationality they may belong.—(*Signed*) C. DE FREYCINET."

In the Declaration of 1890, in which Great Britain recognises the Protectorate of France over Madagascar, Article I. states: "It is understood that the establishment of this Protectorate will not affect any rights or immunities enjoyed by British subjects in that island."

And on November 28, 1895, M. Berthelot, Minister for Foreign Affairs, said in the French Chamber:—

"We need not declare that we shall respect the engagements we have entered into with certain foreign Powers. France has always been faithful to her word." (But perhaps France did not intend to include Great Britain among those foreign Powers with whom it was necessary to keep her word.)

Anyway, we wish Madagascar a peaceful and prosperous future, in spite of past mistakes. Had the Malagasy listened to their English advisers, the war need never have taken place—certainly not at that time.

Over and over again Shervinton counselled peace and judicious concessions to France, as he knew in the end it would work for the best interests of Madagascar. When war became inevitable, he advised that all necessary steps should be taken for protection and defence. Unfortunately, in both cases his advice was unwelcome to the Malagasy Government, and he owed the ruin of his prospects as much to the vacillation of the Hovas as to the vindictiveness of the French.



Photo]

COLONEL W. M. SHERVINTON.
1890.

[C. Vandyk.

Shervinton of Salvador

I

FIGHTING IN SALVADOR

WILLIAM MUNRO SHERVINTON, born in 1857, was the second son of Colonel Shervinton. His name of Munro came from his mother, who belonged to a Highland family of ancient descent.

From his earliest years, Will Shervinton was devoted to reading, possessed a most retentive memory, and was gifted with an extraordinary facility for acquiring languages.

He and his younger brother Tom were the only English-speaking boys at a school in Switzerland, and in an incredibly short space of time M. Vittoz, the headmaster, reported that Will spoke French almost as if it had been his mother-tongue. He afterwards spoke German and Spanish equally well, also some Italian and Portuguese. He subsequently

studied at Mr. Mulcaster's for the army, was gazetted as lieutenant to the 5th Middlesex Militia, and attached to a line regiment in the hope of obtaining a commission. He had the required certificate of qualification, but became impatient of the long time of waiting, and, as a possibly shorter road to a commission, he, with his friend Viscount B—, enlisted in the Life Guards. In a remarkable regiment they were not the least remarkable. They each stood 6 feet $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

Having soldiered for a year, and seeing no early prospect of a commission, they got their discharge. In that short time they had contrived to make a remarkable impression among their comrades. Years after their early deaths (and they died within a short time of each other), the writer of an article on "Gentleman Rankers" in a military paper, "wondered if there were still any old hands in 'Her Majesty's 2nd Cuirassiers' who were brother troopers with poor old 'Don Carlos' (Will Shervinton), or Lord B., or that scarce less famous full private S., whilom Lieutenant and Adjutant of the 29th."

A host of letters were sent in reply. One says, "I am afraid the contemporaries of poor old 'Don Carlos,' 'S.' and poor 'B.' now serving in the 2nd Life Guards could be counted on the tips of one's fingers. It is now twenty years since Don Carlos was in B troop. Poor fellow! I remember him well, and am truly sorry to hear of his early death——" and a short history of his career which followed showed that he was still remembered after twenty years.

On leaving the regiment Will Shervinton and Lord B. visited the German manœuvres, travelled and shot in Algeria, and otherwise saw a good deal of life.

Will was a man of splendid appearance, with the manners of a Spanish hidalgo, and the kindest heart in the world. He possessed an inflexible will, was proud, reserved, and sensitive, prompt to resent an injury, and ever ready to help a friend.

He was about twenty when he met with a most serious accident, the effects of which he felt all the rest of his life. Through some carelessness (the author of which he never betrayed), he was accidentally shot with a rifle. The bullet went through his chest, and was cut away from his right shoulder-blade, where it had buried itself. He lost an immense quantity of blood, and spent months in hospital, after which he was sent to Switzerland to recruit, and slowly recovered his health.

As soon as he was strong enough he joined his brothers at the Cape—in 1879, being then twenty-two years of age; but they had already been there for two years, and there was not much left for a new-comer.

He at once joined Lonsdale's Horse, with which he served throughout the Boer war, and commanded Lord Wolseley's escort on the Tugela. He was at the fight at Morosi's Mountain, and other engagements. At Durban he unexpectedly met his eldest brother Charlie, who had just arrived there after the relief of Ekowe, so thin and altered that Will did not even recognise him when he spoke.

Lord B. was in South Africa too, but rather later

than this, and for some time shared a tent with Charlie, giving him his sword when he left.

Will returned home with a medal and clasp.

He spent some time in New York, but the manner of conducting business there greatly annoyed him : "*They* think themselves smart," he said, "but *I* call them dishonest."

In 1883 he went to Central America with a friend, who had a most important undertaking there, in which Will Shervinton had an interest. He saw a good deal of the country and speedily made friends, his gift of languages standing him in good stead. His life was full of adventures, but he hated writing, and told little about himself.

His headquarters were at San Salvador, a city which had been destroyed again and again by earthquakes. At Sta. Tecla, too, he spent a good deal of time ; it was fifty miles from San Salvador, an eight hours' ride on a very bad road. "For more than half the way," wrote Will, "the volcano Tzalco is in sight. It 'erupts,' as the Yanks say, every five minutes ; quite a grand sight, volumes of flame, and then streams of red-hot lava pouring half-way to the base, succeeded by a dull, deep roar."

On one of these rides he had a rather nasty accident. He was soon noted as a fine rider, and was asked to ride a horse which no one else could manage. After two or three days, as he said, he had "pretty well taken the soul out of him," but coming suddenly on a bullock wagon one day as they turned a corner, the horse danced and a bullock struck him with its horns. After plunging violently the horse

turned a somersault forwards. Will fell right on his head, with the horse across his legs. The helmet he wore saved his neck from being broken, and his friend Don José Salazar was there to look after him.

At the end of the year he had a long and severe illness, which kept him many weeks in hospital, racked with fever and ague. He was so weak when he came out that he nearly fainted with fatigue after walking a hundred yards ; he said that the houses were like vaults, and the awful damp disagreed with him. His letters, too, went astray, "which seems extraordinary, as everybody knows me more or less, but when I was in the hospital they twice sent letters of mine back to La Libertad from Salvador. The Commandante at La Libertad, Don Juan Cánas, a great friend of mine, wrote all over the cover of one of them : 'Mr. Shervinton is a tall, slight young man, and will be found either at the Hospital at Salvador, or in the Hotel of Don Theodore Kreis. He is also a great friend and well known to everybody. What the devil do you mean by continually sending his letters back here ?' The postmaster did not like it, as he happened to know me very well, and always assured me he looked out for my correspondence. Not a word from M. I guess the recording angel has had to employ a staff of clerks lately, and write down anything but blessings.

"The doctors all tell me to take a sea voyage, as it is impossible to get radically cured in this climate, and if I get seriously ill again they won't answer for my life. I don't care a cent about the dying

part of the business, but I must say I shouldn't care to die in this confounded country, and never see any of you before the curtain dropped."

Salvador is the smallest and most civilised, as well as the richest and most honest Republic of Central America. Liberty of the Press and freedom of speech were never denied the people.

Of late the Salvadoreños had been trained and disciplined to an extent never before carried out in Central or South America, special instructors having been asked for, and lent by the Spanish Government. The neighbouring State of Guatemala contained double the number of inhabitants, and was of more than twice the area of Salvador, and having been the original seat of the Capitan-Général when Central America was one State, it still aspired to put itself once more at the head of affairs. It was in every way a contrast to little Salvador, and there was no love lost between the two States.

In February, 1885, Justo Rufino Barrios, the President of Guatemala—known as the Tiger of San Marcos—asked permission from Zaldivar, President of Salvador, for 7,000 troops to pass through his State to fight Nicaragua.

The permit had first to pass the Senate, but the Salvadoreños felt convinced that the army of pretended attack on Nicaragua was in reality intended for the military occupation of Salvador. It was believed that Don Zaldivar, who was a tool of Barrios, was quite capable of being induced by him to connive at all the designs of the hated Guatemaltecos.

Such a catastrophe would have involved the ruin of the State, and the palace was promptly surrounded by a vast concourse of people shouting death to Zaldivar if he dared to give admission to their most detested enemies. The women were especially violent in their demonstrations. The request of Barrios was refused, and preparations were immediately made to resist the Guatemaltecos, should they venture to force their way into Salvador.

Will Shervinton, a fine rider and swordsman, and one of the most popular men in Salvador, was sent for by the President and offered the command of the cavalry, with the rank of Colonel. Nothing could have suited him better. He rode in to San Salvador, over three and a half leagues, in less than three-quarters of an hour, to call upon his officers and men to be ready by six o'clock the following morning.

The people were full of enthusiasm, and all determined to fight to the last.

Barrios, furious at getting a refusal, ordered the immediate advance of his army, hoping to cross the frontier before the Salvadoreños were ready to dispute the passage.

Will Shervinton dashed off to intercept them at El Coco, and an action was fought March 28, 1885. The Salvador troops got rather the worst of it, but the Guatemaltecos were obliged to turn aside, hoping with increased numbers to force their way in elsewhere. There were various engagements, in which the army of Salvador was victorious, and Shervinton received more than one wound.

On one occasion a fight took place in the open Plaza, a great square in the centre of a town, at the opposite corners of which two hospitals faced each other. Here the Little Sisters of Mercy tended the sick. The fighting was severe, and bullets flew like hail across the square.

A foreign officer was wounded and carried insensible into a hospital ward. Becoming dimly conscious, he heard an animated conversation going on around his bed, at the foot of which stood two Salvadoreñan officers, evidently taking shelter from the leaden storm without. Beside him stood a Little Sister of Mercy. From the hospital at the opposite corner of the square they had hung out a flag of distress, asking for assistance, and the Little Sister was entreating one of the Spanish officers to cross the square with a little tray of bandages and other appliances. This they both positively declined to do. The Little Sister in despair said she would carry it herself; men were perhaps bleeding to death in the other hospital for want of necessaries. What these uniformed gentlemen dared not do she would dare, and God would protect her. The wounded man, now fully conscious, raised himself with difficulty and said he would be her messenger, and turning fiercely upon the two Spaniards, said, had they been under his orders he would have torn the epaulettes from their shoulders. He then contrived to roll himself off the bed, but fell instantly on the floor, being quite unable to stand. With the greatest chagrin he saw the Little Sister poise the tray on her head and start on her perilous errand. Finding

the supply was not sufficient, she came back for more, and a second time passed unscathed through the hail of bullets in the Plaza. More than all his wounds it must have hurt him to be forced to see a woman attempt what he was unable to do himself.

Another incident in connection with the Little Sisters of Mercy may be related here. Will Shervinton had a great friend, a Colonel who, strangely enough for a Spaniard in such a bigoted country, had never been baptized. He was rich and charitable, and the Little Sisters frequently benefited by the money which he gave away. It grieved them greatly that he had never been formally made a member of the Church, and they constantly urged him to present himself for baptism, at which he merely laughed. He was killed in the war, and the Little Sisters contrived to get possession of his body. With ceremony and display it was laid in the church and the rites of baptism administered to the corpse. The Little Sisters felt convinced that they had saved a soul from destruction, and the gallant soldier who had resisted this Sacrament all his life was forced to submit to it in death.

The last battle was that of Chalchuapa, fought April 2, 1885. Shervinton was second in command of his division. There had been considerable jealousy aroused at such an important command as that of the cavalry having been given to an Englishman. Shervinton was well aware of it, and was not altogether surprised when, during this engagement, a bullet from behind whistled past his

head. He rode straight up to Don Casimiro Escobar and observed, "If we get out of this alive, I will bring you before the President as a coward and an assassin."

When Will Shervinton once said he would do a thing he never forgot, but more than a year elapsed before he was able to fulfil this threat.

The infantry were now engaged along the frontier, when Shervinton observed a considerable force of the enemy moving behind the Casa Blanca, by a road which had been left unguarded, and which threatened the flank of the Salvador army. It was necessary to stop them at all hazards. He sent a hasty message to Brigadier-General Villavicencio, that he would hold the enemy in check as long as he was able, but that the General must hurry up to his support, and he then dashed forward to defend the road with only eighty men against twelve hundred Guatemaltecos.

The latter seeing the cavalry charging down on them, presented the butt ends of their rifles in token of surrender, but as soon as they saw how small was the number of the Salvador squadron they treacherously fired a volley into them. However, their front ranks went down under the cavalry charge, and they fired at each other at six or eight yards' distance.

Shervinton managed to hold the road until Villavicencio came up with reinforcements, but at what a cost! Of his eighty men only ten came out of it—the papers said only four. Shervinton himself was left for dead on the field, and lay for hours bleeding

from gunshot wounds and parched with thirst. He had two Winchester bullets through his wrist, severing the tendons, and one through his elbow—unfortunately all in the right arm. He had various other bullet wounds, but these were the most serious, and it was almost a miracle that he escaped with his life, for the first discharge took his right epaulette and his forage cap off.

But their resolute stand had saved the day. President Barrios, of Guatemala, the Tiger of San Marcos, with his son and most of his staff lay dead on the field. His body was carried over the frontier to Jutiapa, there embalmed and forwarded to Guatemala city, and buried with a pomp and ceremony rarely seen in Europe.

The *Gazette* of Costa Rica stated that "Senor Shervinton, a young Englishman experienced against the Zulus, entered into the fight with 100 cavalry—of the whole squadron only four remain. They report that the valiant Englishman is dead." A later edition says: "We have the pleasure to announce that Senor Shervinton is alive, and that he fought valiantly at the battle of Chalchuapa, when he received wounds from which he is recovering; and that the Republic highly esteems the services done by him in the past campaign, defending the liberty of Salvador."

When Will Shervinton was picked up insensible from among the heap of dead, he was speedily conveyed to the hospital, and there he lay for many weary months. He had very nearly bled to death on the field, and his vitality was reduced to the lowest ebb. For a long time it was feared that he

could not recover, and one night, when so weak that he was supposed to be unconscious, he heard the doctors whisper to each other, "Poor fellow, he cannot last till morning." Shervinton opened his eyes and said, with the ghost of a smile, "Doctor, I will cheat you yet." The other wounds gradually healed, but the right arm continued to cause grave anxiety. Finally gangrene set in, and it was decided that the arm must be amputated to save his life. Shervinton persistently refused to submit to this, and said he preferred death to living maimed. The only alternative was to undergo a frightful operation, to which he consented. Anæsthetics were administered, but with scarcely any effect ; he still retained consciousness. Stoical as a Red Indian, he set his teeth and endured. The operation lasted for three hours, and he afterwards said that life itself was not worth what he went through during that time. The surgeons were excellent, mostly trained in the Paris hospitals, but they had their faults. The chief surgeon, not being able to attend one day, sent his assistant to dress the wounded arm. He arrived in a state of intoxication, and instead of dipping the bandage in carbonised water, he either dipped it in some acid, or upset the acid over the arm. The fiery liquid poured into the open wound (for during the operation the bone had been laid bare from wrist to elbow), and the agony was so excruciating that Shervinton declared he would have shot the doctor if there had been a pistol handy. But strangely enough the accident turned out a most fortunate one ; the acid burned away all the gangrene from the bone, and the wound began to heal.

From that time, however, it was practically useless, and to his last day it was agony to attempt to do anything with it. It was many months before he was able to hold a pen, and several weeks before he was even able to dictate a few lines home. At the end of nine months his hand was a good deal better, but even then he could not shut it; the loss of the tendons had left it almost powerless. The doctors told him that he would eventually regain the use of it, but he never did to any great extent.

He was looked upon as a perfect hero by the common people; they all said he was the best chief they had, and most of the officers said the same. He was both adored and feared, and possessed immense influence among the people.

When his magnificent constitution had once more pulled him through, and he came out of hospital, he was present one night at some function—I think a ball. They are a rough lot, the Salvadoreños, and a row was going on. An eye-witness related how the tall figure of the young Colonel (in his 29th year) strode down the room, and, as he cast his scornful glances right and left, how the angry voices died into silence and every eye followed him. Even the women in the streets, they said, used to hold up the babies for him to bless as he passed.

II

A CHALLENGE AND ARREST

THE first time Shervinton was able to appear at the Palace, he was greeted with cheers and congratulations, and treated with the greatest honour and distinction. The President at once appointed him his principal aide-de-camp, and subsequently his chief of the staff. Don Zaldivar was no longer President; at the close of the war with Guatemala he had renounced power, and General Don Francisco Menendez, who was most popular with the people, was elected President in his place. Menendez had the reputation of being the only honest President from Mexico to Terra del Fuego, and in the course of five years he brought the Government Bonds from 28 to 89½ the \$100.

There was some expectation of a war with Nicaragua, and Shervinton offered to raise a couple of battalions of a thousand men each. The President thanked him, and said he knew he could do it better than anybody else, because the people had such a high opinion of him. Shervinton had a Krupp gun, 700 stand of arms and ammunition, and a sum of money at his orders; but the disagreement blew

over, the Nicaraguan rebels had to abandon their plots, and the unpopular Government of Nicaragua proceeded to make itself more unpopular. The Salvadoreñan Government under Menendez began to occupy itself with economics, cutting down everything, and discharging large numbers of officers and soldiers. Of course this did not affect Shervinton, who, as the most popular man of the day, was fêted and honoured, and received endless invitations to country houses or seaside places for the "temperatura" or bathing season—to Tacotecoluca and to Lake Ilopango and various other places, to none of which he went, except to Cajutepeque to spend a fortnight with the celebrated General Don José Maria Rivas, who was 6 feet 4 inches in height, and was of Indian descent on one side.

There was a great Festa given at Cajutepeque, to which the General only sent out two special invitations, one being to the President, and the other to Will Shervinton, to whom he telegraphed: "Dearest Friend,—As a proof of affection and distinguished appreciation, I invite you to our Festa, and do not doubt that you will honour us with your presence," &c.

Rivas was the Governor and Commandante of the Department, and second only to the President; it was rumoured that he could be President himself when he chose. He had an extraordinary liking for Will Shervinton, and wanted to keep him with him altogether as Commandante of the Barraco and Mayor de Plaza, but Shervinton preferred San Salvador.

Writing of the Festa, he says : " We had three dances running till five o'clock in the morning ; breakfasts and dinners till I was glad to get away ; up nearly all night and two or three hours' sleep in the day, and as I am still as weak as a cat I can't stand too much racket. I have been awful seedy for three days, and touched nothing but two cups of tea all the time—fever and cold and a touch of liver, but am a good bit better to-day."

When he returned to San Salvador (the capital of the State of Salvador), there was a grand reception—or rather breakfast—given in honour of the Minister of Guatemala, who said to him, " You are Colonel Shervinton ; we know you pretty well in Guatemala. You made a good stand by that Casa Blanca ; how many men did you lose ? " but when told the number he could hardly believe it. The Guatemaltecos themselves had lost over 1,600 killed.

Shortly after this Shervinton was arrested by order of the President for sending a challenge to General Don Casimiro Escobar. But the story shall be told in his own words.

" This famous General, Don Casimiro Escobar, shot at me from behind in the ' Casa Blanca ' in the last war, and offered \$25 to one of my soldiers to murder me, because I threatened to denounce him as a coward and assassin whenever I met Zaldivar.

" The reason he went for me was that in the war he murdered one of my soldiers in the most dastardly manner imaginable, and I reported it to Menendez, who took no notice. But as I was determined to bring the brute to justice, I brought the case before

the Military Judge of the Peace, as they call him here, and he took it up and got all the witnesses ; and even then, by his influence, Casimiro Escobar was never even interfered with. I told the President that he had made a General and Governor Commandante of an assassin, a coward and a thief, and if I didn't get justice I'd take it. I proved that he ran away and hid twice, and left me alone with the troops ; that he had falsified his troop accounts, and was drawing pay in two places at the same time. But all to no purpose.

"Well, I have been waiting more than a year for the proofs of these little jokes of his, and a few days after I got them my valiant General appeared in Salvador with all his stars and stripes on.

"I went to my friend Dr. Castillejo, and told him to take my card and a challenge to him, with another friend, General of Division Don Carlos Ezéta (who was President after Menendez) ; but Casimiro refused to fight, and said he would inform the President.

The Doctor told him only old women did that kind of thing, and begged him, for the honour of his uniform, to accept the challenge.

"Well, he went to the President, and, going out of the Palace, the officer of the guard refused to shoulder arms to him, as all the officers knew the affair, and he is detested all through the country.

"Menendez sent one of his aides-de-camp to put me under arrest in the Guard of Honour, and naturally all my friends went to speak to him. Then Escobar asked him to send me out of the country.

"The old man turned round and said, 'Don't you be afraid, General ; Colonel Shervinton is under arrest, but only till you go away, and I order you to leave the country in twelve hours because you are a coward and a disgrace. Get out of my sight !'

"In the morning the General of the Guard of Honour came to me and said, 'Come out of this, Colonel—you're all right ; let's go and have a cocktail.' We went to see the President afterwards, and he told me he only had me arrested because he knew my character, and that I was likely to thrash the fellow in the street. So after all, you see, I got the best of him, and didn't run the chance of getting another bullet through me ; but although I can only shoot with the left hand, I would have killed that bandit like a dog."

Will Shervinton, who was generally unlucky and probably careless, had another accident which at this time he was hardly strong enough to bear. Riding at a gallop one night along a dark rough road, his horse got the bit in his teeth, and at last put his foot in a hole and rolled over upon Shervinton, who broke a blood-vessel. It was fortunate that the horse did not roll upon his right arm, as he would have smashed it. He took very little notice of this accident, and in a day or two was riding about again just as usual, for in the course of his duties he had to be constantly in the saddle.

Menendez was now becoming very unpopular. The people were greatly discontented because he refused to permit the celebration of the battle of Chalchuapa, in which the Guatemaltecos had been

finally overthrown. But Menendez was anxious not to offend Guatemala ; besides, he had himself come over with Barrios to fight against his own people. He was a good soldier and an honest man, but he was getting tired of his position, and the people were getting tired of him.

Shervinton says : " Naturally Menendez does not care much about 'we others,' as he came over to fight his own countrymen. We shall soon be having elections for President, and there are several candidates. Morals are cheap, and I have about 1,500 men who will vote how I tell them. I am going to do my biggest to get every man for General José Maria Rivas, if he will put up for it. These fellows who are working up another row, will be in the wrong box with Rivas, who will as likely as not put one or two of them against the wall with the regulation dozen of rifles in front.

" Things have been warm in Honduras ; a friend of mine, Emilio Delgado, has been making a revolution, and failed, I am sorry to say, as the President is a second Zaldivar.

" We have been having some fun the last day or so. The President gave a big breakfast to the Deputies, who all got drunk and made asses of themselves. Two of them had a free fight in the street and pulled out their revolvers, but they were both too drunk and frightened to fire, and were pulled up by the police.

" Two others had a challenge, and I was second to one ; but knowing it was a put-up joke, I told the other man's second that there was no joke in the

affair at all, and that if I was fooled by being pulled out of bed at an unearthly hour for nothing, I would give him some work to do on his own account and mine. So he got frightened, and went and explained the joke to my friend, and they settled it. The police got wind of the affair, and the chief sent a dozen men in the morning at 5 a.m. to capture us—and for all I know they may be waiting there still.”

After the war with Guatemala, the Government had made a decree that all Colonels and chiefs of battalions were to be granted the rank of General. Will Shervinton having had some hot words with Zaldívar, who was then President, was left out, and he never put forward a claim or pressed for it in any way whatever, although he had an undoubted right to the rank. It would have been given to him shortly afterwards when Menéndez became President, but unluckily there was a row with the Assembly, which was turned out, and Shervinton's friends in Salvador were very indignant that he should have lost it again.

General Felipe Barrientos, Secretary of the Comandancia, who had been Shervinton's chief, urged him to claim the rank of General as it was his by right ; but Shervinton declined to do so—he said it would be too *infra dig.*

He was rather hoping to get home on leave, as he had never been well for eighteen months, and he felt pretty sure that they would give him the rank before leaving. If Menéndez went, and the Vice-President General Rivas took his place, Shervinton knew he was certain to get justice. Menéndez, too,

was a strictly just and honourable man, but he was probably afraid of giving offence to the native officers, some of whom were naturally a little jealous of Shervinton ; and Menendez had to be a little careful, on account of the way in which he himself had come into power, and most of the powerful men in the Government had come in with him.

They were not much pleased now that the Revolutionary Party were going round collecting subscriptions to celebrate the second anniversary of the battle of Chalchuapa, April 2, 1885, when Barrios of Guatemala was killed.

Ahuachapan was the President's native town, but here he had more enemies than anywhere else. They also hated their Governor, who was a good soldier but too strict for them, and they wanted to petition the President to appoint Shervinton instead. However, Shervinton, who was a friend of the Governor's, told the people that they had better let well alone, for if they got him they'd find they had caught a Tartar.

General Rivas continued to be greatly attached to Will, and when the latter received a capital photo of his father, Colonel Shervinton, Rivas took it and put it away in a place of honour in his own house, saying that Will's father was his friend, and that he would keep the photo until Will replaced it with one of his own. However, he never got back the photograph, as he never had one of his own with which to redeem it. He had the greatest dislike to being taken, and the likeness which appears in this book was taken a few weeks before his death, at the urgent entreaty of his own people.

He was kept pretty busy, as he had to accompany the President when he visited other departments, and on occasions had to command the troops at reviews. It was expected that he would soon be made Governor and commandant of a department. His duties as chief of the staff were sometimes eccentric, and often kept him up and riding until all hours at night or in the morning.

Conspiracy was still in the air, for he writes :—
“We can't make out what is up here. Certain people are doing their level best to make a revolution, and bolster up a row with Guatemala, but we will give them a good hiding if they start. The old man ‘Papa Chico,’ as they call him, is just as plucky as they make them, and although he tolerates them, they had better not put the pressure on him too much. It is a fearful bother for me to write—my hand aches the whole day after. I have had an awful disappointment lately. They proposed me for General in the Assembly, and I certainly should have got the rank, only the secretary mislaid the papers. As the proposal has to go before the Commission of War, they give their verdict, which has to be read three different times in the Assembly, and the third the voting—but by the stupidity of the secretary there was only time to read the verdict (which could not have been more honourable to me) before the Assembly closed. So I shall have to wait till the next Assembly meets—when only one reading will be necessary—but then it is not till next year. This life has been nothing but disappointments. They are doing their level best to make a revolution here.

I wish they would—they will get a fearful licking. The Government are too strong for all these thieves and blackguards who are trying to get into power—friends of Zaldivar and his crew of leeches.”

The mislaying of the papers had probably not been entirely due to accident, though Shervinton himself never hinted at this, but he knew that he had enemies. The country, however, had not been entirely ungrateful to him, for he had been publicly thanked and presented with a sword of honour.

These are translations of some of the papers which were laid before the Senate setting forth Shervinton's claim to the rank of General :—

PROPOSITION OF SEVERAL REPRESENTATIVES OF
THE ASSEMBLY TO CONFER THE RANK OF
GENERAL OF BRIGADE ON COLONEL SHER-
VINTON, 1887.

(All Translated from the Spanish.)

“If it is just to reward the important services which a son of Salvador has rendered to his country in times in which its autonomy and liberty were in danger, it is much more just and reasonable to reward foreigners who, without any other reason than having been extremely friendly with our citizens, have flown in cases of emergency to expose the dearest thing that men possess—that is to say their life—in defence of our institutions.

“In the last National Campaign, the Irish citizen, William Shervinton, with no more obligation than the affection he has for our country, offered his services and placed them at the disposal of the

Government. Together with his sword and knowledge, he assisted at the battle of Chalchuapa, in which he was badly wounded. Whatever was the motive of this distinguished officer, such marked services as he gave have never been recognised, and it is the duty of the representatives of the National Assembly, as true interpreters of the public sentiments, to reward all good servants. Therefore we propose that the Assembly will deign to concede in favour of Colonel Shervinton the rank of a Brigadier-General.

"SALVADOR, *March 30, 1887.*

"(Signed) EUSEBIO JOYA,
M. RACINOS

"(*Representatives of the Assembly*)."

"I, Philip Barrientos, General of Division of the Republican Army, hereby certify what I personally saw in the National Campaign.

"Colonel W. M. Shervinton formed part of the army as commandant of cavalry, and accompanied me as such in various duties.

"On the 1st of April and 2nd of the same month, Colonel Shervinton fought against the enemy with a valour worthy of every eulogy, returning from the combat with three bullets in the right arm.

"Also his honour and subordination were always those of a soldier who knows and practises his duties. And for whatever uses he can put this to, I hereby record it in the City of Salvador.

"*March 30, 1887.*

"(Signed) P. BARRIENTOS

"(*General of Division*)."

Horacio Villavicencio, General of Brigade in the Republican Service :—

“ I hereby certify that Colonel William Shervinton was present at the glorious battle which took place 1st and 2nd of April, 1885, about the City of Chalchuapa.

“ That several times on the 2nd I saw him attack the enemy in person. And after the Casa Blanca was completely flanked, Colonel Shervinton attacked the left wing of the enemy's skirmishers after having been vilely deceived by them by their demonstrations of surrender, in advancing with the butts of their rifles to the front. They were fighting hand-to-hand, when Colonel Shervinton was wounded in the arm. The day after I saw him in the Military Hospital.

“ All of which I certify in virtue that I who sign my name was the chief who aided all his movements. That for all these reasons of heroism, as well as for his adhesion to the country of Salvador, he made himself a creditor to the appreciation and consideration of all her chiefs and citizens.

“ And in order that all this may serve him, I record this in Salvador the 30th March, 1887.

“ (Signed) H. VILLAVICENCIO

“ (General of Brigade).”

III

A MISSION TO GUATEMALA

IN May, 1887, Will Shervinton was sent to La Libertad by the President on political business, in conjunction with the United States Consul, who at the last moment was prevented from going and sent the following letter to the captain of the U.S.S. *Mohican*, in which vessel they were to be conveyed :—

“ U.S. CONSULATE, SAN SALVADOR,

“*May 4, 1887.*

“CAPTAIN DAY, of U.S.S. *Mohican*.

“MY DEAR SIR,—I was most anxious to greet you personally and officially, and had made my arrangements to leave this morning, with the bearer of this note, Colonel William Shervinton, chief of staff of the President of the Republic, who was directed by President Menendez to accompany me to La Libertad as his representative.

“I beg you to receive Colonel Shervinton as mine and the President's impersonation in this behalf.

“I have just received telegrams from Guatemala,

compelling me to remain here to-day to answer them and others that must follow.

"I am, with great respect,

"Your fellow-countryman,

"L. J. DUPRÉ,

"*Consul.*"

Shervinton's health did not improve as time went on; a hacking cough and now and then a severe hæmorrhage kept him low. Dr. Otto von Niebecker, a German, who was considered very clever, told him that his lungs were magnificent, but that he had injured some arteries in his throat and neck through a long-neglected cough and cold. It was probable, though, that the doctor was trying to cheer him, as he had never really regained his natural strength since he had been shot through the lungs before going out to South Africa.

The rainy season, too, was coming on again, and he sent home for a cavalry officer's waterproof cloak, as only miserable flimsy things could be got in Salvador, and he was constantly on some duty that kept him wet through two or three days out of the week. He was the only superior officer who had to do double duty, because, if not with the President, he was pretty certain to be officer of the day (*Jefe de día*), which meant being mounted all night long, and was anything but pleasant in the rainy season. All the President's aides-de-camp took this duty in turn. He accompanied President Menendez to Ahuachapan and then to San Miguel, a ride of eighty leagues or more on a wretchedly bad road and especially disagreeable in the rainy season.

His friend, Dr. Otto von Niebecker, with whom he had shared rooms for two years and a half, died in April, and he felt his loss greatly. An old English gentleman who was very fond of Shervinton pressed him to come and live with him, free of all expense; but naturally he refused, and took up his quarters in a hotel.

Shervinton was now looking so ill that the General of the Staff spoke to the President about it. Menendez immediately ordered his name to be struck off the duty roster till he had quite recovered, and riding up to Will he said, "Colonel, go home, and don't let me see you again for a fortnight." He said he never felt so glad of anything in his life. He went home and went to bed, and there he stayed for a fortnight, but he said if he had dropped dead from the saddle he would not have *asked* for a day's leave. This was on account of the growing unpopularity of the President.

It was the duty of Will Shervinton, as Chief of the Staff, to safeguard him, and he performed this duty faithfully by day and by night—thereby greatly injuring his own health, as he was unable to obtain necessary rest. He knew well that there were plots against the life of Menendez, and he had more than once been offered very large bribes merely to take the President home by a certain road, and ask no questions. His scathing replies can be imagined. Menendez recognised his value, and was always unwilling to part with him. The Minister for Foreign Affairs was very anxious to take Shervinton with him to Guatemala, but the President said it was

impossible, for he had too much need of him. It was a disappointment for Shervinton, who had hoped to go.

Shervinton's enemies were constantly at work behind his back, and one of them went to the President and asked how he could have such confidence in him.

Menendez asked, "Why?"

"Are you not aware that Shervinton is an intimate friend of General Rivas?" was the reply.

"Well, so am I," said Menendez, "and I have known that Shervinton has been his friend for three years; but the Colonel is not like a great many of you fellows—he is not a man to sell himself, and you do yourselves no good by coming here with these humbugging tales."

"It was not a bad shut-up for that sneak, was it?" said Shervinton. "I can't get out who the man was, they won't tell me, or I think he would find out which ran the faster—he or an ounce of lead."

His immense popularity gave great offence to his enemies, for not only was he held in high esteem among the proud descendants of the ancient Spanish conquerors, but also among the lower classes, and especially the Indians. It is the custom in these rough countries to treat the coloured races as but little better than the beasts of the field, but Shervinton's kindly forbearance and well-known courtesy were ever extended to them, so that they looked upon him almost as a superior being, and called him "The White Indian," as a mark of the highest appreciation. It was said that he occasioned some-

thing like consternation one day by yielding his place in a train to an old negress—or an old woman of the lowest order ; but he said it was impossible for him to sit, while a woman had to stand. He had not changed much from the day, years before, when, as a smart young officer of militia, he was seen to take a bucket of water out of an old woman's hand, and carry it up to the top of the house for her.

One day an angry crowd had collected during a time of anticipated revolt, stormily threatening the heads of the Government. Will Shervinton appeared upon the scene, and was received with shouts of "Don Guillaum ! Don Guillaum !" Every head was uncovered, and in respectful silence they listened to his words and quietly dispersed at his command, the women holding up their children to catch a word or a smile from him, which they considered equivalent to a blessing.

By his friends he was generally known as "Don Carlos," and oddly enough it had also been the nickname given to his father when in the 46th Regiment.

But his enemies were constantly going to the President with stories of his sayings and doings, and of the people he visited. They even tried to persuade him that Shervinton was endeavouring to get up a revolution in order to make himself President, and that this was the reason of his friendly behaviour to the Indians, for it was quite certain that if he entertained such a design, he would have the whole Indian population at his back, as well as the mass of the common people. Although well aware of their aspersions, Will

Shervinton went on his way in contemptuous disregard of them. For a long time Menendez altogether refused to listen, but as continual dropping will wear away a stone, he grew impatient at last, and directed Shervinton to discontinue his visits to certain people. To this Will replied—no doubt with the haughty manner which was natural to him when offended—that when on duty he scrupulously obeyed orders, but when off duty he considered that he had a perfect right to spend his leisure how and where he pleased. This did not smooth matters, and a soldier was privately told off to follow him as a spy, and to report all his proceedings, especially the names of the people he visited. It happened that this man had ridden with Shervinton at Chalchuapa, and revolted at the idea of prying upon his colonel, who had led them so gallantly and all but lost his life in doing so. He came straight to his old chief and acquainted him with his orders, and how little he liked them. Shervinton characteristically replied that he was welcome to follow him, and to report everything he said and did, and when he found it thirsty work he was to get a drink and put it down to his account.

This man proved somewhat of a disappointment to his employers; time went on and he had nothing to report, so he was at length withdrawn and a man of a different stamp put in his place.

Will bore for a time with his dodging and spying, but before long his patience gave way. One night, as he was going his rounds on his tour of duty as President's aide-de-camp, he observed this spy.

skulking in the shadow of a wall. It suddenly occurred to Shervinton to lead him a dance and tire him out, and he rode slowly up and down and in and out, till they were outside the city boundaries; then suddenly wheeling his horse, he went straight at the man and felled him with the butt-end of his revolver. He said afterwards that he could not shoot as they were close to the powder magazine.

Early next morning he was surprised by an urgent summons, demanding his immediate presence at the Palace, and on arrival he found one of his greatest enemies, the Chief of Police, with the President.

Menendez at once said that he wished to call Colonel Shervinton's attention to the fact that a serious outrage had been committed, and no notice had been taken of it by the aide-de-camp on duty. A man in Government employ had been found close to the wall of the magazine, where he stated he had been attacked in the night by seven banditti.

Will Shervinton promptly replied, "Sir, I am the seven banditti, and no one knows it better than your informant who stands there. Either he or I leave your service to-day; you cannot do without him—he does the dirty work for you which I will never do; so I will be the one to leave. To place a spy upon me is a worthy return for all I have done and suffered in the service of Salvador." Tearing off his epaulette he threw it on the floor, and with one indignant glance at the President and the Chief of Police, he strode from the room.

This was not at all what Menendez desired. Well he knew the incorruptible nature and sterling worth

of the man he had offended. It was not long before he sent for him, saying that he had dismissed the Chief of Police, and wished Shervinton to return to his duties on his personal staff. This was firmly refused, and he ceased to be an active officer in the army of Salvador, to the great regret of the President, who was doubtless aware that Shervinton had frequently stood between him and the evil designs of his enemies, and that as long as he was on duty no suspected traitor ventured to approach.

Menendez never ceased to evince his regard and attachment, and although Shervinton had severed his connection with the Staff, he continued to employ him on political and confidential missions to other States, in which he personally represented the President. In 1888 he was entrusted with a diplomatic mission to Guatemala as representative of the President of Salvador, to General Manuel Barrillos, the President of Guatemala. Menendez did not attempt to conceal from him that he was doubtless incurring danger in visiting this State, where there was a feeling of ill-will against him in certain circles on account of the part he had taken against them in the late war.

It had been the darling ambition of several Presidents of Guatemala to restore to that State its ancient title of Capital of the Capitan Général which it had held prior to the disintegration of the great State of Central America into minor states. The struggle to restore the *ancien régime* recurred from time to time, and the reason for the animosity against Shervinton was that he had largely helped to foil their designs against Salvador.

Guatemala is not a choice place of residence for the political envoys of other States. The great object of all is to "make their pile," for life is short and precarious in these countries. Justo Rufino Barrios, who met his death at Chalchuapa, left an immense fortune to his descendants. He had ruled for twelve years. Barrillos was now President of Guatemala, a merciless tyrant capable of every crime, and, like most tyrants, thoroughly detested by the people and by all classes of society. In the short space of time occupied by him as President, he had personally ordered over two hundred men to be shot, all for political purposes. At one time the military struck owing to arrears of pay. General Barillos had an exceedingly original mode of paying his officers, the police being paid in like manner. At the end of three or four months an officer would receive Government paper to the value of his pay; this he would have to pay to a certain German-Jew firm in the capital at a discount of 30 per cent., the profits being divided between the Company and the President.

The system of espionage was there so thoroughly carried out, that if a man breathed a word about the President or Government in any café or public place, he would probably find himself in prison in the morning, and the following day in the penitentiary, by "orden supremo," *i.e.*, order of the President.

It was a great contrast to the little Republic of Salvador, where liberty of speech was free to all, and which had been invaded over and over again by Guatemala, who had taken all its money, burned

its villages, and behaved in such a way that the Guatemalteci nickname "chapin" was used in Salvador as equivalent to "ladron," or thief. The Salvadoreñan was of an entirely different stamp; he was essentially plucky, hardworking, and if treated well was as faithful as a dog; he had a preference for foreign officers, more especially for Englishmen. The rule in Guatemala is a despotism, and the priesthood is looked upon as the backbone, if not the originator, of current revolutions. They are, therefore, under constant suspicion. For a priest to walk down the street in his *soutane* will probably land him in the guard-house, where he will be stripped, given a uniform and a musket, and put on sentry. These persecutions had reached such an extent that the Archbishop, an old and venerable ecclesiastic, threatened to excommunicate the tyrant.

In the midst of the preparations for this solemn function, a rumble of wheels and hoarse words of command were heard in the Plaza before the Episcopal Palace—it was a battery of artillery unlimbering. The Archbishop was seized, and old and feeble as he was, forced to march under escort until all but sinking with fatigue. He was taken to Puerto San José and told that he had to leave Guatemala, but could go to any other country he liked, and there say and do what he pleased. There was an old hidalgo, the descendant of an ancient Spanish family, whose beautiful young daughter was the inmate of a convent. The President had either seen or heard of her, and demanded the consent of the father to her becoming his wife. This

was firmly declined, and the father was given a fortnight to reconsider his decision. As he had not changed his mind at the end of that time, he was torn from his home and placed in the gang whose business it was to clean the streets, with no place of repose or chance of rest by night or day, except what the streets might afford. At length, utterly worn out, he gave his consent, and the marriage took place. On the sudden death of the President several years later (the deaths of the Presidents were mostly sudden) the convent-bred widow came into a fortune of over fifteen millions of dollars, amassed by means of extortion, threats, and worse.

As soon as Shervinton arrived in Guatemala, he called upon Barrillos and presented his credentials, but was treated with marked discourtesy, whereupon he promptly withdrew from the Palace. Early next morning his servant awoke him to say that the President's aide-de-camp was waiting to see him. Shervinton got up, put on his dressing-gown and desired that he should be admitted. After a brandy-and-soda the aide-de-camp remarked that President Barrillos was in a hurry to see him. Shervinton replied that he knew of no cause for hurry. The aide-de-camp half drew his sword, and Will said quietly, "My good fellow, *look* out of that window—now if you do that again I will *throw* you out. You may tell your President that I am accustomed to be treated as a gentleman, and as apparently he does not see the necessity, I must decline to call upon him until he does." The aide-de-camp retired in high dudgeon.

Will had not been long in Guatemala when he was made aware of the fact that he had enemies there. When walking back to his hotel one night, he felt something cold and keen touch his side, and sprang round ; in a moment the would-be assassin had ceased from troubling, and would never repeat the dastardly blow. The knife had passed through Shervinton's clothes, and merely grazed the skin.

Another attempt was made to get rid of the man who dared to disregard the tyrant's will, and who had only his left hand with which to defend himself. Sauntering back to his inn one evening, an arm, with a knife, was thrust rapidly over his shoulder from behind. Will caught the blade in his hand, the palm of which and his fingers were deeply cut across, and the knife in its passage entered the cleft of his chin, the point passing between his lower front teeth ; the marks he carried to his grave, but the murderer paid for the attempt with his life, and instantly.

Will was accustomed to sleep with a loaded revolver beside him, and to start up broad awake at the slightest sound. It was his fortune to come in for many a fray, but as he said himself, he was never the first to shoot. Besides his enemies in Guatemala, he had a considerable number of friends who greatly admired him and wished to do him honour. But the game was hardly worth the candle ; he curtailed his stay, departed for San José, and eventually reached Salvador in safety.

IV

RETURN HOME

FOR the moment Salvador wore a peaceful aspect, and as the doctors were constantly urging upon Will Shervinton the imperative necessity of a sea voyage, he announced his early departure, for he was longing for home.

He bade farewell regretfully to Menendez and his numerous friends, capitalised his pension into gold, and left for the Port of La Libertad, with the full intention of never seeing Salvador again. Orders were given that every honour should be paid him on the occasion of his departure ; a great entertainment was given to him, and the Governor of La Libertad, to mark his esteem, accompanied him in his own boat to the ship, which lay at some distance from the shore.

Unfortunately, one of the sudden squalls so common in these waters came upon them when they were scarcely half-way to the ship, and the boat capsized. All its occupants being plunged into the water, were rescued at some risk. Will Shervinton had lost everything—his kit, his money, and,

most vexatious of all, the sword of honour which had been presented to him in recognition of his services to the State—all had gone down in sixty fathoms. A severe attack of fever was the result of this accident. On his arrival at Panama it turned to yellow fever, and for weeks he was laid up at the hospital there. When sufficiently recovered to attend to his affairs, he telegraphed home for funds, and started immediately on receipt of them.

At New York he had a severe attack of influenza which left him very weak, but in spite of all the mishaps of his protracted journey, he arrived in London at last, after an absence of six years.

It was not easy to draw from him the tale of his adventures and experiences. They were ordinary everyday affairs to him, although most thrilling to the listener when told in his own graphic language. A most interested and, indeed, adoring listener was young Rajoelson, grandson of Rainilaiarivony, Prime Minister of Madagascar. Joelson was now at Woolwich Academy, but he frequently came to London, and took an extraordinary fancy to Will, following him about in a most amusing fashion. And a remarkable contrast they presented—the dark little Malagasy of 5 feet nothing, and the tall, fair Englishman of 6 feet $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

In the course of a few months he had largely recovered his health, and he then received an offer to go to Spanish America in the interests of an eminent firm of engineers, who were negotiating an extensive railway project there, and considered that his influence might materially assist them. Will

Shervinton had always considered that railway communication was the one thing necessary to develop the resources of the country and to double its revenue. The want of them had always been greatly felt, the cost of transport being so heavy. The export of fruit alone should have been something enormous, as the country abounded in all kinds of tropical fruit, which simply dropped off the trees and lay rotting on the ground. Oranges, pineapples, bananas, mangoes, cocoanuts, nisperos, papaya, or natural pepsine, the aquacate, or alligator pear, were all to be had for next to nothing; pineapples cost considerably less than a shilling a dozen, and other fruits were equally cheap. The country also possessed flourishing coffee plantations, mines, &c.

Shervinton gladly accepted the offer, as the project was one which he had always hoped to see carried out, and at Christmas-time, after another short but sharp attack of influenza, he started for La Libertad once more. Here he was most warmly welcomed, and, as the result of his negotiations, the line was conceded and surveys instituted.

Meanwhile Bogran, the President of Honduras, repeatedly wrote and telegraphed to him to come to Teguchegalpa, the capital of that State, to consider the project of an inter-oceanic railway, through the contiguous States of Honduras and Salvador.

He was by no means anxious to undertake the long and trying ride, as he was far from strong; however, he and his Indian boy started from La Union on mules to make their way through

sweltering plains and over a chain of mountains, on the summit of which the cold was intense. The absence of shelter, the scanty food, the violent changes of temperature, all contributed to the subsequent breakdown of his health; and black coffee and cigarettes, on which he chiefly existed, were not the best of fare for a long and arduous ride.

During this visit to Honduras he made the acquaintance of an American from New Orleans, who held a large gold concession in the Department of Olancho, and who afterwards came to England, when he related many characteristic stories of Will.

One day upon going into an inn for their mid-day meal, they found the place full of men, who scowled angrily upon their entrance, muttering among themselves and casting hostile glances at the strangers. In a place like this an angry word or even look was frequently followed up with a knife or a bullet. Will Shervinton glanced round with his usual calm indifference, and seeing a pack of cards lying scattered on a table, picked up the five of clubs and leisurely pinned it against the wall. Then stepping back he drew his revolver and put in the four corner spots, with his left hand. The sullen crowd had watched this little bit of pistol practice with breathless interest—it was the kind of thing that most appealed to them, and when Shervinton turned round and asked, “Will any of you gentlemen put in the middle spot for me?” they broke into cheers. His friend said it was like a hawk over a dovecote as he seemed to bend and

sway the crowd at his will; but for the rest of his stay there, Will was the most popular man in Teguchegalpa. In February he returned to Salvador and visited the line at Sausonate.

Here he had rather an escape. He and his young friend Gallardo took the construction train to the end of the line, where their servants were to await them with mules to go on to Santa Tecla. The engine being behind, they sat on the truck in front, with their legs dangling down outside. The cuttings were very narrow and it was a pitch-dark night, their only light being a lantern held by a boy who was with them. They were going pretty fast when they came across a cow and a calf; the cow jumped and escaped, but the calf stood right in the centre of the track, and as the train went over it, just caught Shervinton's feet and nearly pulled him off.

When they got the mules they had a very rough ride. It was perfectly dark and there were very steep drops; they just let go the reins and trusted to the sure-footed mules. Gallardo continually said, "If I had only known I would have waited;" and when Shervinton laughed, he said it was all very fine for him, because he didn't care whether he broke his neck or not. Shervinton assured him that he cared very much and had not the slightest intention of breaking it.

He once said to a man who told him that he would not mind dying at any moment, "My good fellow, wait till you try. As for me, I have faced Death a hundred times, and I never liked him yet."

The long rides and the distances he had to accomplish tried Shervinton a good deal, but at last the survey was completed and all looked well for the railway enterprise. Then came the financial blow from Argentina which shook a great London house to its foundations, involving with it the firm of engineers, who had consequently to abandon the scheme. The Salvadoreñan Government, however, paid all the costs and accepted the plans of survey instead.

And now Will Shervinton turned his face towards home once more. By his final departure President Menendez lost the last remaining link which sustained the waning attachment of the people of Salvador to either his person or his rule.

While celebrating by a banquet the fifth anniversary of his entrance into the city as President of the Republic, it was announced that he had suddenly died on the steps of the Palace. Who shall venture to affirm the attendant circumstances of that death?

In the midst of the festivities an unforeseen attack was made on the quarters of the Guard of Honour. General Marcia and others were killed. Menendez was dead, and after a brief interregnum General of Division Don Carlos Ezéta reigned in his stead.

He was a well-known soldier, having got his brigade as quite a young man under Barrios, and subsequently his division from Menendez for his conspicuous bravery in the war of 1885. He was also extremely popular with all classes, being familiarly called Don Carlitos. He was a strict disciplinarian, but liberal-minded and just, and his

choice of Senor Molina-Guirola as Minister gave universal satisfaction.

Once more Will Shervinton found himself at home among his own people. The doctors insisted upon perfect rest and unremitting care ; all this was his, but too late—the grand constitution had finally broken down. Walking home from a relative's one winter night, an artery near the track of the old chest wound gave way ; no cab was available, but the kindly arm of a stranger helped him home. A few weeks he lingered in intense suffering and weakness, borne with the most stoical patience and without a single murmur—and then the curtain dropped. In death, as in life, he had upheld the motto of his house, "*Courage sans peur*."

Many expressions of sorrow and sympathy were received from Central America—even from his old antagonist Guatemala. We translate some of them from the Spanish in which, of course, they are all printed.

From the *Diario de Centro America*, Guatemala, 7th of February, 1891: "'In London on the 27th of December, 1890, died Colonel William Munro Shervinton, 33 years of age, Chief of the Staff, Commandant of Cavalry, Salvador, and second son of Lieut.-Colonel Shervinton,' so says a London newspaper. Colonel Shervinton was very well known amongst us. When very young he served in the English army that fought in Zululand, where he was wounded, and received a medal from Queen Victoria. Latterly he lent his military services to

Salvador in the campaign of 1885, and was then invalided. Subsequently he figures on the Staff of the President General Menendez. Peace to the remains of Colonel Shervinton."

President Menendez was dead, but Don Carlos Ezéta, the new President, wrote the following letter, which we translate from the Spanish, to Will's father :

"SAN SALVADOR, *February 23, 1891.*

"*To COLONEL C. R. SHERVINTON, London.*

"DEAR SIR,—I have to acknowledge the receipt of your esteemed letter, dated 6th of January last, which brought me the melancholy news of the death of your son, William Munro Shervinton, on the 27th of December last. This sad event has caused the deepest impression on the minds of all natives of Salvador who had the opportunity of becoming acquainted with the exalted merits of our departed friend, who, by his bravery, love of discipline, and intelligence, had attained a distinguished post in the ranks of the army—so much so as to obtain by his merits the rank of Substantive Colonel. In that capacity I have no doubt his name will be distinguished in the history of our country.

"And this he well deserves for the important services which he rendered to Salvador—even shedding his blood in the defence of her independence.

"Deeply I deplore the death of our distinguished brother-in-arms ; and this regret is shared by all my countrymen. I pray that you may find resignation to the decrees of Providence, and receive, at

the same time, both from my brother Antonio and myself, the assurance of our deepest sympathy.

"I send herewith, and I beg you to accept, a few copies of *El Pueblo*, a newspaper published in this capital, in which you will see an article relating to the sad event which induces me to send this letter.

"With assurances of the greatest respect, I beg to remain,

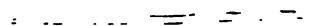
"Your obedient servant,

"CARLOS EZÉTA

"(*President of the Republic of Salvador*)."

From *El Pueblo*, San Salvador, *February 17, 1891* :
"WILLIAM MUNRO SHERVINTON.—On the 27th of December last, the Colonel whose name we have placed at the head of this article died in London, at the early age of 33. Colonel Shervinton was the scion of a distinguished Irish family, residing in London, where he received a brilliant education. From his earliest youth he showed a disposition for the noble career of arms. His intelligent vivacity soon caused him to find the rigid customs of his native country irksome to his impetuous temperament, and induced him to abandon the numerous advantages which he enjoyed in the society of his family in favour of the brighter impressions and freer life of America, whither he directed his course. Thus he arrived at Salvador, a land so beloved by him that with entire satisfaction he elected to remain and adopt it henceforth as his second country. Shervinton soon acquired the affectionate regard due to his frank and generous character, and the

nobility and sincerity which distinguished him. He was beloved by those of his own age, and esteemed by all. He entered the military service of the Republic, in which he served with the strictest honour and loyalty, his sword ever ready to defend the sacred rights of his adopted country. In the battlefield he was bold and intrepid, performing acts of bravery which filled the beholders with astonishment, yet endowed with a tranquil calm in the midst of the greatest danger. He was wounded several times when fighting in the just defence of the people of Salvador. His blood, moreover, has assisted to moisten the furrows in which has flourished the seed of our growing liberty. For all these causes Colonel Shervinton has proved himself worthy of the deep gratitude with which our countrymen regard him; and to-day we, in the columns of this journal, give public expression to our grateful feelings, rendering due homage to the memory of one who never hesitated before any sacrifice if thereby he could aid in the defence of the colours under which he fought. We have received the sad news of his untimely death by private letters from London. We publish a copy of one sent by Colonel Shervinton's father to the General Officer President of the Republic. Before ending this short sketch we are anxious to convey to the bereaved family of our loyal friend, Shervinton, the expression of our deepest sympathy and regret, that we may show (and may it be some slight consolation in their bereavement) that the memory of Colonel William Munro Shervinton is green in



the hearts and memory of the whole people of Salvador."

Although the lives and characters of the two elder Shervintons were widely different, there were some striking points of resemblance in their careers. Both were soldiers of fortune, absolutely fearless, and unswerving in their devotion to duty. As boys, both enlisted in distinguished cavalry regiments; afterwards went out as volunteers to South Africa, served there and won their medals. Both went into foreign services, obtained the rank of Colonel, and were promised that of General, for distinguished service. Charlie St. Leger Shervinton never assumed the title, although he wore the uniform of a Lieut.-General, and Will Shervinton left the service before his rank was confirmed. Both served loyally and disinterestedly, and were treated with some ingratitude in the end. Both resigned their appointments, were asked to return to them, and refused. Both came home to die, and were buried in the same grave.

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